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By *JOHN WESLEY*, M. A.

Late FELLOW of *Lincoln-College*, OXFORD.

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FROM THE
WORKS
OF

JOHN OWEN, D. D.

Some Time *Vice-Chancellor* of the Uni-
versity of CAMBRIDGE,

CONTINUED.



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FROM THE

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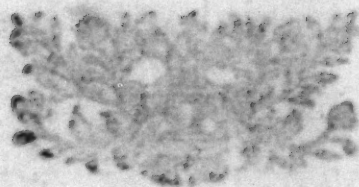


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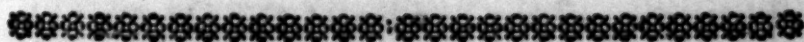
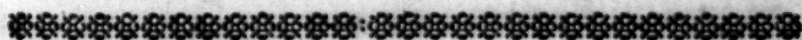
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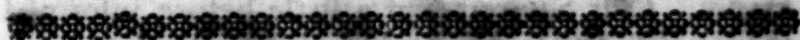
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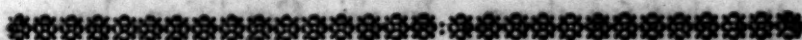
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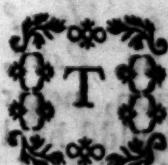
CHAP. I.

Of the Nature of TEMPTATION.



MATT. xxvi. 41.

*Watch and pray that you enter not into
Temptation.*

 HESE Words of our Saviour are repeated with very little Alteration in three Evangelists; only whereas *Matthew* and *Mark* have recorded them as above written, *Luke* reporteth them thus; *Arise and pray that you enter not into Temptation;*

8 Of TEMPTATION, the

tation; so that the whole of his Caution seems to have been; Arise, watch and pray, that you enter not into Temptation.

SOLOMON tells us of some, that *lie down on the Top of a Mast in the Midst of the Sea*, Prov. xxiii. 34. Men overborn by Security in the Mouth of Destruction. If ever poor Souls lay down on the Top of a Mast in the Midst of the Sea, these Disciples with our Saviour in the Garden did so. Their Master at a little Distance from them, was offering up Prayers and Supplications with strong Cries and Tears, being then taking into his Hand, and beginning to taste that Cup that was filled with the Curse and Wrath due to their Sins. The *Jews* armed for his, and their Destruction, being but a little more distant from them, on the other Hand. Our Saviour had a little before informed them, That that Night He should be betrayed, and delivered up to be slain; they saw that He was sorrowful, and very heavy. Nay, He told them plainly, That his *Soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death*; and therefore entreated them to tarry, and watch with Him, now He was dying, and that for them. In this Condition, leaving them but a little Space like Men forsaken of all Love towards Him, or Care of themselves, they fall fast asleep. *Peter* being one of them, who, but a little before, had with so much Confidence affirm'd, That tho' all Men forsook Him, yet he never would; our Saviour expostulates the Matter in particular with him, *ver. 10. He saith unto Peter, could you not watch with Me one Hour?* As if He should have said, Art thou he, *Peter*, who but now boastedst of thy Resolution, never to forsake Me? Is it likely that thou shouldst hold out therein, when thou canst not watch with Me one Hour? Is this thy Dying for Me; to be dead

in.

in Security, when I am dying for thee? And indeed it was an amazing Thing, that *Peter* should make so high a Promise, and be immediately so careless in the Pursuit of it; but that we find the Root of the same Treachery in our own Hearts, and see the Fruit of it brought forth every Day: The most noble Engagements to Obedience quickly ending in deplorable Negligence.

IN this Estate our Saviour admonishes them of their Condition, their Weakness, their Danger, and stirs them up to a Prevention of that Ruin, which lay at the Door; saith He, *Arise, watch, and pray.*

I SHALL not insist on the Particular aimed at here by our Saviour, in this Caution to them that were then present with Him, the great Temptation that was coming on them, from the Scandal of the Cross, was doubtless in his Eye; but I shall consider the Words, as containing a general Direction to all the Disciples of *Christ* throughout all Generations.

THERE are three Things in the Words,

FIRST, The Evil cautioned against: Temptation.

SECONDLY, The Means of its Prevalency; by our entering into it.

THIRDLY, The Way of preventing it, watch and pray.

TEMPTATION in its special Nature, as it denotes any Evil, is consider'd, either actively, as it leads to Evil, or passively, as it hath an Evil and

10 Of TEMPTATION, *the*

and Suffering in it; so Temptation is taken for Affliction, *Jam. i. 2.* For in that Sense, we are to count it all Joy when we fall into Temptation; in the other, that we enter not into it.

AGAIN, actively considered, it either denotes, a Design for the bringing about the special End of Temptation, namely, a leading into Evil; so it is said, that GOD *tempts no Man*, *Jam. i. 13.* Or the general Nature, and End of Temptation, which is Trial; so GOD tempted *Abraham*.

THEY are not the Temptations of GOD, that are here intended: And therefore I shall set these apart from our present Consideration, that is, Temptation in its special Nature, as it denotes an active Efficiency towards Sinning, that I intend.

IN this Sense, Temptation may proceed either singly from *Satan*, or the World, or other Men in the World, or from ourselves, or jointly from all, or some of them, in their several Combinations.

[1.] SATAN tempts sometimes singly by himself, without taking Advantage from the World, the Things or Persons of it, or ourselves. So he deals in his Injection of blasphemous Thoughts, which is his own Work alone. For Nature will contribute nothing thereunto, nor any Thing that is in the World, nor any Man of the World. Herein *Satan* is alone in the Sin, and shall be so in the Punishment. These fiery Darts are prepared in the Forge of his own Malice, and shall with all their Poison, be turned into his own Heart forever.

[2.] SOMETIMES he makes Use of the World, and joins Forces against us, without any Helps from

from within. So he tempted our Saviour, by shewing Him the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them. And the Variety of the Assistances he finds from the World, in Persons and Things, the innumerable Instruments he takes from thence, are inexpressible.

[3.] SOMETIMES he takes in Assistance from ourselves also. It is not with us, as it was with *Christ*, when *Satan* came to tempt Him, He declares, that He *had Nothing in Him*. It is otherwise with us: He hath, for the Compassing of most of his Ends, a sure Party within our own Breasts. But the Principles, Ways and Means of Temptations, the Kinds, Degrees, Efficacy and Causes of them, are inexpressibly large, and various, the Circumstances of them from Providence, Nature, Conditions, spiritual and natural, with the particular Cases thence arising, innumerable. I shall content myself to give a Description of the general Nature of that which we are to watch against.

TEMPTATION then in general, is any Thing or Condition, that upon any Account whatever, hath a Force or Efficacy to draw the Mind and Heart from its Obedience into any Sin.

IN particular, that is a Temptation to any Man, which occasions him to sin, or in any Thing to go off from his Duty, either by bringing Evil into his Heart, or drawing out that Evil, that is in his Heart, or any other Way, diverting him from Communion with God, and that constant, equal, universal Obedience, in Matter, and Manner, that is required of him.

HAVING

HAVING shewed what Temptation is, I come Secondly, To manifest what it is to enter into Temptation.

1. THIS is not merely to be tempted: It is impossible that we should be so freed, as not to be at all tempted. Whilst *Satan* continues in his Power and Malice, whilst the World and Lust are in Being, we shall be tempted: *Christ*, says one, was made like unto us, that He might be tempted; and we are tempted that we may be made like unto *Christ*: Temptation in general is comprehensive of our whole Warfare; as our Saviour calls the Time of his Ministry, the Time of *his Temptation*, Luke xxii. 21. We have no Promise that we shall not be tempted at all, nor are to pray for an absolute Freedom from Temptations, because we have no Promise of being heard therein. The Direction we have for our Prayers, is, *Lead us not into Temptation*, Matt. vi. 9. it is *entering into Temptation*, that we are to pray against: We may be tempted, yet not enter into Temptation. So that,

2. SOMETHING more is intended by this Expression, than the ordinary Work of *Satan*, and our own Lusts, which will be sure to tempt us every Day. There is something signal in this entering into Temptation: It is something that befalls us peculiarly in Reference to Seduction to Sin, on one Account or other, by Way of Allurement, or Affright.

3. IT is not to be conquered by a Temptation; to fall down under it; to commit the Sin that we are tempted to. A Man may enter into Temptation, and yet not fall into Temptation. GOD can make a Way for a Man to escape, He can break the

the Snare, tread down *Satan*, and make the Soul more than Conqueror, tho' it have entered into Temptation: *Christ* entered into it, but was not in the least foiled by it. But,

4. It is as the Apostle expresseth it. 1 *Tim.* vi. 9. *To fall into Temptation*; as a Man falls into a Pit, or a deep Place, where are Gins, and Snares, wherewith he is entangled, the Man is not presently killed, and destroyed, but he is entangled and detained, he knows not how to get free. So it is expresse'd again to the same Purpose, 1 *Cor.* x. 13. No Temptation hath taken you: To be taken by a Temptation, is to be entangled with it, held in its Cords, not finding at present a Way to Escape. Thence saith *Peter*, 2 *Ep.* ii. 9. *The LORD knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of Temptations*: They are entangled with them, GOD knows how to deliver them out of them. When we suffer a Temptation to enter into us, then we enter into Temptation: Whilst it Knocks at the Door, we are at Liberty; but when any Temptation comes in, and parlies with the Heart, reasons with the Mind, allures the Affections, we enter into Temptation.

So then, to our entering into Temptation is required,

(1.) THAT on some Occasion, *Satan* be more earnest than ordinary in his Sollicitations to Sin, by himself or others; or that some Lust or Corruption by his Instigation, and Advantages of outward Objects provoking, as in Prosperity, or terrifying, as in Trouble, do tumultuate more than ordinary within us.

(2.) THAT the Heart be so far entangled with it, as to be put to Dispute in its own Defence, and

yet not be able wholly to cast out the Poison, that which hath been injected. And this usually falls out in one of these two Seasons:

[1.] WHEN *Satan* by the Permission of GOD, hath got some peculiar Advantage against the Soul.

[2.] WHEN a Man's Corruptions meet with peculiar provoking Objects, through the Condition of Life he is in, with the Circumstances of it.

IN this State of Things, a Man is entered into Temptation; and this is called the *Hour of Temptation*, Rev. iii. 10. The Season wherein it grows to a Head; the Discovery whereof will give farther Light into the present Enquiry; for when the Hour of Temptation is come upon us, we are entered into it. Every great and pressing Temptation hath its Hour, a Season wherein it is most vigorous, active and prevalent. It may be long in rising, it may be long urging more or less; but it hath a Season, wherein from the Conjunction of other Occurrences, outward or inward, it hath a dangerous Hour, and then for the most Part, Men enter into it. Hence that very Temptation, which at one Time hath little or no Power on a Man; at another, bears him away before it: It hath from other Circumstances got new Strength; or the Man is weakened, the Hour is come, he is entered into it, and it prevails. Let Men look for it, that are exposed to Temptation, as who is not? They will have a Season wherein their Sollicitations will be more urgent, their Reasonings more plausible, Pretences more glorious, Opportunities more broad and open, the Doors of Evil made more beautiful than ever they have been: Blessed is he who is prepared for such a Season, without which there is no escaping.

This

This is the first Thing required to entering into Temptation; if we stay here, we are safe.

BEFORE I descend to other Particulars, having now entered hereon, I shall shew in general,

1.) How commonly any Temptation attains its Hour.

2.) How we may know when any Temptation is come to its Hour.

1.) IT doth the first by several Ways.

(1. BY long Sollicitations, causing the Mind frequently to converse with the Evil solicited to, it begets extenuating Thoughts of it. If it makes this Process, it is coming towards its Hour. It may be when first it began to press upon the Soul, the Soul was amazed with the Appearance, and cried, Am I a Dog? If this Indignation be not daily heightened, but the Soul by conversing with the Evil, begins to grow as it were familiar with it; then the Temptation is coming towards its high Noon, Lust hath then enticed, and is ready to conceive.

(2. WHEN it hath prevailed on others, and the Soul is not filled with Dislike and Abhorrency of their Ways, nor with Pity and Prayer for their Deliverance. This proves an Advantage to it, and raises it towards its Height.

(3. BY complecating it's self with many Considerations, that perhaps are not absolutely Evil. So did the Temptation of the *Galatians* to fall from the Purity of the Gospel, Freedom from Persecution, Union and Consent with the *Jews*: Things in them-

themselves good, were pleaded in in it, and gave Life to the Temptation itself.

2.) FOR the second, it may be known.

(1. BY its restless Urgency. When a Temptation is in its Hour, it is restless. *Satan* sees his Advantage, considers his Conjunction of Forces, and knows that he must now prevail, or be Hopeless for ever. Here are Opportunities, here are Advantages, here are specious Pleas and Pretences; some Ground is already got, all in a Readiness; if he can do nothing now, he must sit down lost in his Undertakings. So when he had got all Things in a Readiness against *Christ*, he made it the Hour of Darkness. When a Temptation presses within by Imaginations and Reasonings, without, by Sollicitations, Advantages and Opportunities, let the Soul know, that the Hour of it is come, and the Glory of GOD, with its own Welfare, depends on its Behaviour in this Trial.

(2. WHEN it makes a Conjunction of Affrightments and Allurements. These two comprize the whole Force of Temptation. When both are brought together, Temptation is in its Hour. They were both in *David's* Case, as to the Murther of *Uriah*; there was the Fear of his Revenge on his Wife, and possibly on himself; fear of the Publication of his Sin, at least; and there was the Allurement of his present Enjoyment of her. Men sometimes are carried into Sin by Love to it, and are continued in it by Fear of what will ensue. But in any Case, where these two meet, then is the Hour of Temptation.

THIS then it is to enter into Temptation, this is the Hour of it, of which more in the Process of our Discourse.

(3. THERE

(3. THERE is the Means of Prevention prescribed by our Saviour, they are two,

1.] WATCH. 2.] PRAY.

THESE two comprize the whole Endeavour of Faith for the Soul's Preservation from Temptation.



CHAP. II.

*That it is our Duty to use all Diligence,
least we enter into TEMPTATION.*

HAVING thus opened the Words, I shall lay down the ensuing Observation.

It is the great Duty of all Believers to use all Diligence in the Ways of *Christ's* Appointment, that they fall not into Temptation.

1. IN that compendious Instruction given us by our Saviour, concerning what we ought to pray for, this of not *entering into Temptation*, is expressly one Head. Our Saviour knew of what Concern it was to us, not to enter into Temptation, when he gave us this, as one special Subject of our daily Dealing with GOD. And the Order of the Words shew us of what Importance it is, *Lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil*. So deal with us, that we may be powerfully delivered from that Evil, which attends our entering into Temptation.

2. CHRIST promiseth this Deliverance as a great Reward of most acceptable Obedience, *Rev. iii. 10.*

This is the great Promise made to the Church of *Philadelphia*, wherein *Christ* found nothing that He would blame. *Thou shalt be kept from the Hour of Temptation*; not, thou shalt be preserved in it: But He goes higher, *thou shalt be kept from it*. There is, saith our Saviour, an Hour of Temptation coming; a Season that will make Havock in the World; Multitudes shall then fall from the Faith, deny and blaspheme Me. O how few will be able to stand and hold out! Some will be utterly destroyed and perish for ever, some will get Wounds to their Souls that shall never be well healed, whilst they live in this World, and have their Bones broken, so as to go halting all their Days. But, saith He, *Because thou hast kept the Word of my Patience*, I will be tender towards thee, and keep thee from this Hour of Temptation. Certainly that which *Christ* thus Promises to his beloved Church, as a Reward of her Service, Love, and Obedience, is no light Thing; whatever *Christ* promiseth to his Spouse, is a Fruit of unspeakable Love; that is so in an especial Manner, which is promised as a Reward of special Obedience.

3. LET us to this Purpose consider the general Issues of Men's entering into Temptation, and that of bad and good Men.

(1.) FOR the first I shall offer but one or two Texts of Scripture, *Luke viii. 13. They on the Rock, are they which when they hear, receive the Word with Joy, and have no Root, but for a While believe.* They are affected with the Preaching of the Word, and bring forth some Fruits: But until when do they abide? Says he, *In the Time of Temptation they fall away*: When once they enter into Temptation they are gone for ever. We see this accomplished every Day; Men who have attended on the
Preaching

Preaching of the Gospel, been affected and delighted with it, that have made Profession of it, and have been looked on, it may be, as Believers, and thus have continued for some Years; no sooner doth a Temptation befall them, that hath Vigour and Permanency in it, but they are turned out of the Way, and are gone for ever. So *Matt. vii. 26.* *He that beareth these Words of mine, and doth them not, is like a Man that built his House upon the Sand:* But, what doth this House of Profession do? It shelters him, keeps him warm, and stands for a While; but saith he, *ver. 27.* When the Rain descends, when Temptation comes, it falls utterly, and its Fall is great.

(2.) FOR the Saints of GOD themselves, let us see by some Instances, what Issue they have had of their entering into Temptation.

ADAM, was the Son of GOD, (*Luke iii.*) created in the Image of GOD; full of Integrity, Righteousness and Holiness. He had a far greater inherent Stock of Ability than we; and had nothing in him to entice or seduce him, yet this *Adam* no sooner enters into Temptation, but he is ruined, he and all his Posterity with him. What can we expect in the like Condition, that have not only in our Temptations, a cunning Devil to deal with, but a cursed World, and a corrupt Heart also?

ABRAHAM was the Father of the Faithful; *Gen. xii. 12, 13.* Whose Faith is proposed as a Pattern to all them that shall believe; *Gen. xx. 2.* Yet he entering twice into the same Temptation, namely that of Fear about his Wife, was twice overpowered by it, to the Dishonour of GOD, and no doubt the Disquiet of his own Soul.

DAVID is called a Man after GOD's own Heart; yet what a dreadful Thing is the Story of his entering into Temptation: He is no sooner entangled, but he is plunged into Adultery; thence seeking Deliverance by his own Invention, he is entangled more and more, until he lies as one dead, under the Power of Sin and Folly.

I MIGHT mention *Noah, Lot, Hezekiah, Peter,* and the rest, whose Temptations and Falls therein, are on Record for our Instruction. Certainly he that hath any Heart in these Things, cannot but say as the Inhabitants of *Samaria* upon the Letter of *Jehu*; *Behold two Kings stood not before Him, how shall we stand?* O LORD! If such mighty Pillars have been cast to the Ground, how shall I stand before Temptations? O keep me that I enter not in, behold the *Footsteps* of them that have gone in. Whom do you see retiring without a Wound? On this Account would the Apostle have us to exercise Tenderneſs towards them that are fallen into Sin, *Gal. vi. 1. Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted:* He doth not say, lest thou also sin, or be overtaken with a Fault; but lest *thou also be tempted*; thou seest the Power of Temptation in others, and knowest not thou mayest be tempted, nor what will be the Condition of thy Soul thereupon. Assuredly he that hath seen so many better, stronger Men than himself fail, will think it Incumbent on him to remember the Battle, and if it be possible, to come there no more. Is it not a Madness for a Man that can scarce crawl up and down, he is so weak (which is the Case of most of us) if he avoid not what he hath seen Giants foiled in the Undertaking of? Thou art yet whole and sound, take Heed of Temptation, lest it be with thee as it was with *Abraham, David, Peter,* who fell in the Time of Trial.

IN nothing doth the Folly of the Hearts of Men shew itself more, than in this cursed Boldness, after so many Warnings from God, and so many sad Experiences, of running into, and putting themselves upon Temptations. Any Society, any Company, any Conditions of outward Advantages, without once weighing what their Strength, or what the Concern of their poor Souls is, they are ready for. Though they go over the Dead and the Slain, that but even now fell down before them, yet they will go on without Regard or Trembling. But,

4. LET us consider ourselves; what our Weakness is, and what Temptation is; its Power and Efficacy, with what it leads to.

(1.) FOR ourselves, we are Weakness itself. We have no Strength, no Power to withstand. Confidence of any Strength in us, is one great Part of our Weakness. He that says he can do any Thing, can do nothing as he should. And which is worse, it is the worst Kind of Weakness that is in us; a Weakness from Treachery; a Weakness arising from that Party which every Temptation hath in us. If a Fort be never so strong, yet if there be a treacherous Party within, there is no preserving it from the Enemy. There are Traitors in our Hearts, ready to take Part with every Temptation, and to give up all to them; yea, to solicit and bribe Temptations to do the Work; as Traitors incite an Enemy. Do not flatter yourselves that you shall hold out; there are secret Lusts that lie lurking in your Hearts, which perhaps now stir not, which as soon as any Temptation befalls you, will rise, seduce, and never give over 'till they are killed, or satisfied.

(3.) TEMP-

(3.) TEMPTATIONS are either publick or private; and let us a little view the Efficacy and Power of them apart.

[1.] THERE are publick Temptations; such as that mentioned, *Rev. iii. 10.* That was to come upon the World to try them that dwell upon the Earth; or a Combination of Persecution and Seduction for the Trial of a careless Generation: Now concerning such a Temptation, consider, that,

1.) IT hath an Efficacy in Respect of GOD, who sends it to revenge the Neglect of the Gospel on the one Hand; and Treachery of false Professors on the other. What Work hath the Spirit of Error made amongst us? Is it not from hence, that as some Men delighted not to retain GOD in their Hearts, so He hath *given them up to a reprobate Mind*, *Rom. i. 28.* A Man would think it strange, yea, it is Matter of Amazement, to see Persons of a sober Spirit, pretending to great Things in the Ways of GOD, overcome, captivated, destroyed, by weak Means, sottish Opinions, foolish Imaginations, such as a Man would think it impossible should ever lay hold on rational Men, much less on Professors of the Gospel.

2.) THERE is in such Temptations, the secret Insinuation of Examples in those that are accounted Good, *Mat. xxiv. 12.* *Because Iniquity shall abound, the Love of many shall wax cold, &c.* The abounding of Iniquity in some, will insensibly cast Water on the Zeal and Love of others, that by little and little it shall wax cold. Some begin to grow Negligent, Careless, Worldly, Wanton; they break the Ice towards the Pleasing of the Flesh; at first others Blame, perhaps Reprove them, in a short Space their Love waxes cold, and they also conform.

form to them, and are cast into the same Mould with them.

3.) PUBLICK Temptations are usually accompanied with strong Reasons and Pretences, that are too hard for Men, or at least insensibly prevail upon them, to undervalue the Evil whereto the Temptation leads, to give Strength to that complicated Temptation, which in these Days have even cast down the People of GOD, hath cut their Locks, and made them become like other Men; how full is the World of specious Pretences and Pleadings! As there is the Liberty of *Christians*, delivered from Bondage; this is a Door that in my own Observation, I have seen sundry going out at, into Sensuality and Apostacy; beginning at a light Conversation, proceeding to a Neglect of the Sabbath, publick and private Duties, ending in Dissolution and Profaneness. These and the like Considerations, joined with the Ease and Plenty, the Greatness and Promotion of Professors, have so brought Things about, that whereas we have by Providence shifted Places with the Men of the World, we have by Sin shifted Spirits with them also. We are like a Plantation of Men carried into a forreign Country: In a short Space they degenerate from the Manners of the People from whence they came, and fall into that of the Country whereunto they are brought; as if there were something in the Soil and the Air that transformed them.

[2.] SUPPOSE the Temptation is private; this hath been spoken to before; I shall add two Things,

1.) ITS Union and Incorporation with Lust, whereby it gets within the Soul, and lies at the Bottom of its Actings. The Things that are in the World,

World, *are the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, the Pride of Life.* Now it is evident that all these Things are principally in the Heart, not in the World. But they are said to be in the World, because the World gets into them; mixes itself with them, unites, incorporates. As Faith and the Promises are said to be mixed, so are Lust and Temptation mixed; they twine together, receive Improvement from one another; grow each of them higher and higher by the Strength they administer to one another. Now by this Means Temptation gets so deep in the Heart, that no contrary Reasonings can reach it; nothing but what can kill the Lust, can conquer the Temptation. Like Leprosy that hath mingled itself with the Wall; the Wall itself must be pulled down, or the Leprosy will not be cured. Like a Gangreen that mixes Poyson with the Blood and Spirits, and cannot be separated from the Place where it is, but both must be cut off together.

2.) In what Part soever of the Soul the Lust be seated, wherewith the Temptation is united, it draws after it the whole Soul, by one Means or other, and so prevents or anticipates any Opposition. Suppose it be a Lust of the Mind; as there are Lusts of the Mind, and Uncleaness of the Spirit; such as Ambition, Vain-glory, and the like; what a World of Ways hath the Understanding to bridle the Affections, that they should not so tenaciously cleave to God, seeing in what it aimeth at, there is so much to give them Content and Satisfaction! It will not only prevent all the Reasonings of the Mind, but it will draw the whole Soul into the same Frame. Or be it in the more sensual Part, and first possesseth the Affections; what Prejudices they will bring upon the Understanding, how they will bribe it to an Acquiescency; what Arguments, what
Hopes

Hopes they will supply it with cannot easily be expressed. In brief there is no particular Temptation, but, when it is in its Hour, it hath such a Contribution of Assistance from Things good, evil, indifferent, is fed by so many Considerations, that seem to be most foreign to it, hath such specious Pleas, that its Strength will easily be acknowledged.

THESE I say are some of many Considerations, that might be insisted on, to manifest the Importance of the Truth proposed, and the Fulness of our Concern, to take Care that we enter not into Temptation.

BUT what need of this great Endeavour and Carefulness? Is it not said that *GOD is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will with the Temptation also make a Way to Escape?* 1 Cor. x. 13.

(1.) HE that wilfully or negligently enters into Temptation, hath no Reason in the World to promise himself any Assistance from GOD, or any Deliverance from it. The Promise is made to them whom Temptations befall in their Way, whether they will, or not; not them that wilfully fall into them, that run out of their Way to meet with them. And therefore the Devil (as is usually observed) when he tempted our Saviour, left out that Expression of the Text of Scripture, which he wrested to his Purpose, *all thy Ways*: The Promise of Deliverance is to them who are in their Ways; whereof this is one, to beware of Temptation.

(2.) To enter on Temptation on this Account, is to venture on Sin (which is the same with continuing in Sin) that Grace may abound, *Rom. vi. 1, 2.* Which the Apostle rejects the Thoughts of

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with the greatest Detestation; is it not a Madness for a Man willingly to suffer the Ship wherein he is, to split itself on a Rock, to the irrecoverable Loss of his Merchandize, because he supposes he shall in his own Person swim safely to shore on a Plank? Is it less in him, who will hazard the Shipwreck of all his Comfort, Peace, Joy, and so much of the Glory of God, and Honour of the Gospel as he is intrusted with, meerly on Supposition that his Soul shall yet escape?



C H A P. III.

*Particular CASES; several Discoveries
of the State of a SOUL entering into
T E M P T A T I O N.*

TH E S E Things being premised, I proceed to the Consideration of three particular Cases arising from the Truth proposed; the *first* whereof relates to the Thing itself; the *second* to the Season thereof; and the *last* to our Deportment in Reference to the Prevention of the Evil treated of.

1. **T H E N** it may be enquired, how a Man may know when he is entered into Temptation?

2. **W H A T** Seasons there are wherein a Man may, and ought to fear, that an Hour of Temptation is at Hand?

3. **W H A T**

3. WHAT Directions are to be given, for the Preventing of our entring into Temptation.

1. How shall a Man know whether he be entred into Temptation or no, is our first Enquiry : I say then,

(1.) WHEN a Man is drawn into any Sin, he may be sure that he hath entred into Temptation. All Sin is from Temptation. Sin is a Fruit that comes only from that Root. Though a Man be never so suddenly, or violently surprized with any Sin, it is from some Temptation or other, that he hath been so surprized.

THIS is a Folly that possesses many, who have yet a quick and living Sense of Sin : They are sensible of their Sins, not of their Temptations ; are displeased with the bitter Fruit, but cherish the poisonous Root : Hence in the Midst of their Humiliations for Sin, they will continue in those Ways, those Societies, in the Pursuit of those Ends, which have occasioned that Sin.

(2.) TEMPTATIONS have several Degrees, some arise to such an Height, do so press on the Soul, so fight against all Opposition, that it must be past all Doubt to him who is so assaulted, that it is a peculiar Temptation he is to wrestle with. When a Fever rages, a Man knows he is sick, unless his Distemper have made him mad.

(3.) ENTRING into Temptation may be seen in the lesser Degrees of it. As for Instance, when the Heart begins secretly to like the Temptation, and is content to feed it, and encrease it by any Ways that it may, without down-right Sin.

(4.) WHEN by a Man's State or Condition of Life, or any Means whatever, it comes to pass, that his Lust and any Temptation meet with Occasions for its stirring up; let that Man know, whether he perceive it or not, that he is certainly entered into Temptation. If thy Business, Course of Life, Societies, or whatever else it be, cast thee on such Things, as suit thy Corruption; know that thou art entered into Temptation; how thou wilt come out, GOD only knows.

(5.) WHEN a Man is weakned, made negligent, or formal in Duty, when he can omit Duties, or content himself with a careless, lifeless Performance of them, without Delight, Joy, or Satisfaction to his Soul, who had another Frame formerly; let him know, that though he may not be acquainted with the particular Distemper, wherein it consists; yet in something or other, he is entered into Temptation, which at the length he will find evident to his Trouble and Peril. How many have we seen and known in our Days, who from a warm Profession, have fallen to be negligent, careless, indifferent in Praying, Reading, Hearing, and the like? Give an Instance of one who hath come off without a Wound? Sundry other Evidences there are of a Soul's entring into Temptation, which upon Enquiry it may discover.

I PROPOSE this to take off the Security that we are apt to fall into; and to manifest what is the peculiar Duty that we are to apply ourselves to in the special Seasons of Temptation.





CHAP. IV.

*What are the best Directions to prevent
entring into TEMPTATIONS.*

HAVING seen the Danger of entring into Temptation, and the Ways and Seasons wherein Men usually do so; Our second Enquiry is; what general Directions may be given to preserve a Soul from that Condition that hath been spoken of. And we see our Saviour's Direction in the Place spoken of before, he sums up all in these two Words, *Watch* and *Pray*; I shall a little labour to unfold them.

I. THERE is included in them, a clear abiding Apprehension of the great Evil, that there is in entring into Temptation. That which a Man watches and prays against, he looks upon as Evil to him, and by all Means to be avoided.

THIS then is the first Direction; Always bear in Mind the great Danger that it is, for any Soul to enter into Temptation.

IT is a woful Thing to consider what slight Thoughts the most have of this Thing: So Men can keep themselves from Sin itself, in open Action, they are content, they scarce aim at more; on any Temptation, all Sorts of Men will venture at any Time. How will young Men put themselves on any Company; at first being delighted with evil Com-

pany, then with the Evil of the Company? How vain are all Admonitions and Exhortations to them, to take Heed of such Persons? At first they will venture on the Company, abhorring the Thoughts of practising their Lewdness: But what is the Issue? Unless it be here or there one, whom God snatches with a mighty Hand from the Jaws of Destruction, they are all lost, and become after a While in Love with the Evil, which at first they abhorred. Would it were only thus with young Men, such as are unaccustomed to the Yoke of the LORD. What Sort of Men is free from this Folly in one Thing or other? How many have I known that would plead for their Liberty, as they called it? They could hear any Thing, all Things; all Sorts of Men, all Men; they would try all Things, whether they come to them in the Way of God, or no; and on that Account would run to hear every Broacher of false and abominable Opinions; they had their Liberty, they could do it; but the Opinions they hated as much as any; what hath been the Issue? I scarce ever knew any come off without a Wound; the most have had their Faith overthrown: Let no Man then pretend to fear Sin, that doth not fear Temptation to it. They are too nearly ally'd to be separated. *Satan* hath put them so together, that it is very hard for any Man to put them asunder.

BOLDNESS upon Temptation, springing from several Pretences, hath, as is known, ruined innumerable Professors; and still continues to cast many down from their Excellency; nor have I the least Hope of a more fruitful Profession amongst us, until I see more Fear of Temptation. Sin will not long seem great or heavy unto any, to whom Temptations seem light or small.

THIS

THIS is the first Thing in this general Direction; The daily Exercise of our Thoughts with an Apprehension of the great Danger that lies in entring into Temptation. Grief of the Spirit of GOD, Disquietment of our own Souls, Loss of Peace, Hazard of eternal Welfare, lie at the Door; if the Soul be not prevailed with, to observe this Direction, all that ensues, will be of no Value; Temptation despised will conquer: And if the Heart be made tender and watchful here, half the Work of securing a good Conversation is over. And let not him go any farther, who resolves not to improve this Direction in a daily conscientious Observation of it.

2. THERE is this in it also, that it is not a Thing in our own Power to preserve ourselves from entring into Temptation. Therefore are we to pray that we may be preserved from it, because we cannot save ourselves.

THIS is another Means of Preservation; as we have no Strength, to resist a Temptation, when it doth come, when we are entered into it, so to reckon that we have no Power or Wisdom to keep ourselves from entring into Temptation, but must be kept by the Power and Wisdom of GOD, is a preserving Principle. *We are in all Things kept by the Power of GOD.* This our Saviour instructs us in, not only by directing us to pray that we be not led into Temptation; but also by his own praying for us, that we may be kept from it. *Christ* prays his Father to keep us; and instructs us to pray that we be so kept; it is not then a Thing in our own Power. The Ways of our entring into Temptation are so many, various, and imperceptible; the Means of it, so efficacious and powerful, the Entrance of it so deceitful, subtile, insensible, and plausible; our Weakness, our Unwatchfulness, so unspeakable,
that

that we cannot in the least preserve ourselves from it: We fail both in Wisdom and Power for this Work.

LET the Heart then commune with itself and say, I am poor and weak, Satan is subtle and powerful; watching constantly for Advantages against my Soul; the World earnest, pressing, and full of specious Pleas and Ways of Deceit; my own Corruption violent, enticing, entangling, conceiving Sin, and warring in me, against me. Occasions and Advantages of Temptation innumerable in all Things I do or suffer, in all Busineses and Persons with whom I converse. The first Beginnings of Temptation insensible and plausible; so that left unto myself I shall not know that I am ensnared, until my Bonds be made strong, and Sin hath got Ground in my Heart; therefore on GOD alone will I rely for Preservation. This will make the Soul be always committing itself to the Care of GOD, resting itself on Him; and to do nothing, undertake nothing without asking Counsel of Him. So that a double Advantage will arise from the Observation of this Direction, both of singular Use for the Soul's Preservation from the Evil feared.

(1.) THE Engagement of the Compassion of GOD, who hath called the Fatherless and Helpless to rest upon Him; nor did ever Soul fail of Supplies, who, in a Sense of Want, rolled itself on Him, on the Account of his gracious Invitation.

(2.) THE keeping it in such a Frame, as on various Accounts, is useful for its Preservation; he that looks to GOD for Assistance in a due Manner, is both sensible of his Danger, and conscientiously careful in the Use of Means to preserve himself, which

which two, of what Importance they are in this Case, may be easily apprehended.

3. THIS also is in it, Exert Faith on the Promise of GOD for Preservation. To believe that he will preserve us, is a Means of Preservation. For this GOD will certainly do, or make a Way for us to escape out of Temptation, if we fall into it, under such a believing Frame. We are to pray for what GOD hath promised. Our Requests are to be regulated by his Promises and Commands, which are of the same Extent. Faith closes with the Promises, and so finds Relief. This *James* instructs us in *Chap. i. 5, 7.* What we want we must ask of GOD: But we must ask it in Faith, for otherwise we must not think *that we shall receive any Thing of the LORD.* This then also is in this Direction of our Saviour, that we act Faith on the Promises of GOD, for our Preservation out of Temptation. He hath promised that He will keep us in all our Ways; that we shall be directed in a Way, that though we are Fools, *we shall not entertain it,* *Isa. lv. 8.* that He will lead us, guide us, and deliver us from the evil One. Set Faith on Work on these Promises. It is not easily conceived, what a Train of Graces Faith is attended with, when it goes forth to meet *Christ* in the Promises: nor what a Power for the Preservation of the Soul lies in this Thing.

4. WEIGH these Things severally, and,

(1.) TAKE Prayer into Consideration, to pray that we enter not into Temptation, is a Means to preserve us from it. Glorious Things are by all Men that know ought of those Things, spoken of this Duty; and yet the Truth is, not one half of its Excellency, Power, and Efficacy is known. He that would be little in Temptation, let him be
much

much in Prayer. This calls in the Help that is laid up in *Christ* for us, *Heb. iv. 16.* This casteth our Souls into a Frame of Opposition to every Temptation. When *Paul* had given Instruction for the taking to ourselves the whole Armour of *GOD*, that we may stand in the Time of Temptation, he adds this general Close of the Whole, *Eph. vi. 18. Praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and Watching thereunto with all Perseverance and Supplication.*

WITHOUT this all the Rest will be of no Efficacy. And therefore consider what Weight he lays on it: *Praying always*, that is, at all Times and Seasons, or be always ready for the Discharge of that Duty, *With all Prayer and Supplications in the Spirit*; putting forth all Kinds of Desires unto *GOD*, that are suited to our Condition, according to his Will, and which we are assisted in by the Spirit, and watching thereunto, lest we be diverted, by any Thing whatever; and that not for a little While, but with all Perseverance; Continuance lengthened out to the utmost. The Soul so framed, is in a sure Posture; and this is one of the Means without which this Work will not be done. If we do not abide in Prayer, we shall abide in cursed Temptations. Let this then be another Direction. Abide in Prayer! And that expressly to this Purpose; that we enter not into Temptations: Let this be one Part of our daily contending with *GOD*; that he would preserve our Bodies, Souls, and Spirits, and keep our Hearts and our Ways, that we be not entang'ed; that his good and wise Providence will order our Ways and Affairs, that no pressing Temptation befall us; that he would give us Diligence, Carefulness, and Watchfulness over our own Ways: So shall we be delivered, when others are held with the Cords of their own Folly.

THE other Part of our Saviour's Direction, namely, to Watch, is more general, and extends itself to many Particulars.

I. WATCH the Seasons wherein Men usually enter into Temptation.

THERE are sundry Seasons wherein an Hour of Temptation is at Hand ; and will unavoidably seize upon the Soul, unless it be delivered by Mercy in the Use of Watchfulness. When we are under such a Season, then we are peculiarly to be upon our Guard, that we enter not into Temptation. Some of those Seasons may be named.

(I.) A SEASON of unusual outward Prosperity is usually accompanied with an Hour of Temptation. Prosperity and Temptation go together ; yea, Prosperity is a Temptation ; many Temptations ; and that because without eminent Supplies of Grace, it is apt to cast a Soul into a Temper exposed to any Temptation, and provides it with Fuel and Food for all ; it hath Provision for Lust, and Darts for Satan.

THE wise Man tells us, that the *Prosperity of Fools destroys them*, Prov. i. 31. it hardens them in their Way, makes them despise Instruction, and put the evil Day (whose Terror should influence them into Amendment) far from them. Without a special Assistance, it hath an inconceivably malignant Influence on Believers themselves. Hence *Agur* prays against Riches, because of the Temptation that attends them, *Left*, saith he, *I be full and deny thee, and say who is the LORD?* Prov. xxx. 8, 9. *Left*, being filled with them he should forget the LORD ; as GOD complains his People did, *Hos.* xiii. 6. We know how *David* was mistaken in this Case,

Case, *Psal. xxx. 6. I said in my Prosperity, I shall never be moved: All is well, and will be well; but what was at Hand, what lay at the Door, that David thought not of? ver. 7. Thou didst hide thy Face, and I was troubled: GOD was ready to hide his Face, and David to enter into Temptation, and he knew it not.*

THOU wantest that which should poise and ballast thy Heart. Formality in Religion will be apt to creep upon thee, and that lays the Soul open to all Temptations in their full Power and Strength. Satisfaction and Delight in outward Comforts, the Poison of the Soul, will be apt to grow upon thee. In such a Time be vigilant, be circumspect, or thou wilt be surprized. *Job* says, that in his *Affliction* GOD made his Heart soft, Chap. xxiii. 16. There is a Hardness, an insensible Want of spiritual Sense, gathered in Prosperity, that if not watched against, will expose the Heart to the Deceits of Sin and Baits of *Satan*: Watch and Pray in this Season, many Mens Negligence in it hath cost them dear, their Experience cries out to take Heed. Blessed is he that feareth always, but especially in a Time of Prosperity.

(2.) A TIME of Slumber, of Neglect in Communion with GOD, of Formality in Duty, is a Season to be watched in, as that which hath certainly some other Temptation attending it.

LET a Soul in such an Estate awake and look about him; his Enemy is at Hand, and he is ready to fall into such a Condition as may cost him dear all the Days of his Life: His present Estate is bad enough in itself; but it is an Indication of that which is worse, that lies at the Door. The Disciples that were with *Christ* in the Mount, had not only

only a bodily, but a spiritual Drowfiness upon them. What says our Saviour to them? *Arise, Watch and Pray, that you enter not into Temptation.* We know how near one of them was to a bitter Hour of Temptation, and not watching, he immediately entred into it.

CONSIDER then thy State and Condition! Doth thy Light burn dim? or though it give to others as great a Blaze as formerly, dost thou see so clearly the Face of GOD in *Christ*, as thou hast done? is thy Zeal cold? or if it do the same Works as formerly, is thy Heart warmed with the Love of GOD, and to GOD, in them as formerly, but only thou proceedest in the Course thou hast been in? Art thou negligent in the Duties of Praying or Hearing? Or if thou dost observe them, is it with that Life and Vigour as formerly? Does thy Delight in the People of GOD faint and grow cold? Or is thy Love to them changing from that which is purely spiritual, into that which is carnal, upon the Account of Suitableness of Principles, and natural Spirits, if not worse Foundations? If thou art drowfing in such a Condition as this; take Heed; thou art falling into some woful Temptation, that will break all thy Bones, and give thee Wounds that shall stick by thee all the Days of thy Life. Yea, when thou awakest, thou wilt find it hath laid hold of thee already, though thou perceivedst it not; it hath smitten and wounded thee, though thou hast not complained, nor sought for Relief or Healing.

If any that reads the Word of this Direction be in this Condition, if he hath any Regard for his poor Soul, let him now awake, before he be entangled beyond Recovery. Take this Warning from GOD; despise it not.

(3.) A Season of great spiritual Enjoyments, is often by the Malice of *Satan*, and the Weakness of our Hearts, turned into a Season of Temptation.

WE know how the Case stood with *Paul*, 2 Cor. xii. 7. he had glorious spiritual Revelations of GOD and *Jesus Christ*; instantly *Satan* falls upon him; a Messenger from him buffets him, so that he earnestly begs its Departure; but yet is left to struggle with it. GOD is pleased sometimes to give us especial Discoveries of Himself and his Love; to fill the Heart with his Kindness, *Christ* takes us into the Banqueting-House, and gives our Hearts their Fills of Love; and this by some signal Work of his Spirit, overpowering us with a Sense of Love, in the unspeakable Privilege of Adoption. A Man would think, this was the securest Condition in the World: What Soul does not cry with *Peter* in the Mount; *It is good for me to be here*, to abide here for ever? But yet very frequently some bitter Temptation is at Hand. *Satan* sees that being possessed by the Joy before us, we neglect many Ways of Approach to our Souls, wherein he seeks and finds Advantages against us. Is this then our State? Does GOD give us to drink of the Rivers of Pleasure, that are at his Right-Hand, and satisfy our Souls with his Kindness as with Marrow and Fatness? Let us not say, we shall never be moved; we know not how soon GOD may hide his Face, or a Messenger from *Satan* buffet us.

BESIDES, there lies often worse Deceit in this Business. Men cheat their Souls with their own Fancies, instead of a Sense of GOD's Love by the Holy Ghost; and when they are lifted up with their Imaginations, it is not expressible how fearfully they are exposed to all Manner of Temptations; and how then are they able to find Relief from their own

own Deceivings wherewith they sport themselves? May we not see such every Day? Persons walking in the Vanities and Ways of this World, yet boasting of their Sense of the Love of GOD, shall we believe them? We must not then believe Truth itself, and how woful must their Condition be?

(4.) A FOURTH Season, is a Season of Self-Confidence; then usually Temptation is at Hand.

THE Case of *Peter* is clear unto this: *Though all Men should deny Thee, I will not*: Though I were to die for it, I would not do it. This said the poor Man, when he stood on the very Brink of that Temptation, that cost him such bitter Tears. And this taught him so far to know himself all his Days, and gave him such Acquaintance with the State of all Believers, that when he had received more of the Spirit and of Power, yet he had less of Confidence, and saw it was fit that others should have so also; and therefore persuades all Men to *pass the Time of the Sojourning here in Fear*, 1 Pet. i. 17. not to be confident and high, as he was, lest, as he did, they fall. At the first Trial he compares himself with others, and vaunts himself above them; *Though all Men should forsake Thee, yet I will not*; he fears every Man more than himself: But when our Saviour afterwards comes to him, and puts him directly upon the Comparison, *Simon Peter, lovest thou me, more than these?* He hath done comparing himself with others, and only cryeth, LORD, *Thou knowest that I love Thee*: He will lift up himself above others no more. Such a Season often falls out. Temptations are abroad in the World, false Doctrines, with innumerable other Allurements; we are ready every one to be confident, that we shall not be surprized with them; tho' all Men should fall into these Follies, yet we would not; surely we

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shall

shall never go off from our walking with GOD; it is impossible our Hearts should be so sottish: But, says the Apostle, *Be not high minded, but fear; Let him that standeth take Heed lest he fall.* Wouldest thou think that *Peter*, who had walked on the Sea with *Christ*, confessed Him to be the Son of GOD, been with Him on the Mount when he heard the Voice from the excellent Glory, should at the Word of a Servant-Girl, instantly fall a Cursing and Swearing that he knew Him not? Let them take Heed of Self-Confidence who have any Mind to take Heed of Sin. And this is the first Thing in our Watching, to consider well the Seasons wherein Temptation usually makes its Approaches, and be armed against them. And these are some of the Seasons wherein Temptations are nigh at Hand.



CHAP. V.

Several Acts of Watchfulness against TEMPTATION proposed.

THAT Part of Watchfulness against Temptation which we have considered, regards the outward Means, Occasions, and Advantages of Temptation; proceed we now to that which respects the Heart itself: Watching or keeping of the Heart, which above all Keepings we are obliged to, comes within the Compass of this Duty also; for the right Performance whereof, take these ensuing Directions.

I. LET

I. LET him that would not enter into Temptation labour to know his own Heart, to be acquainted with his own Spirit, his natural Frame and Temper, his Lusts and Corruptions, his natural, sinful, or Spiritual Weaknesses, that finding where his Weakness lies, he may be careful to keep at a Distance from all Occasions of Sin.

OUR Saviour tells the Disciples, that *they knew not what Spirit they were of*, which under a Pretence of Zeal betrayed them into Ambition and Desire of Revenge. Had they known it, they would have watched over themselves. *David* tells us, *Psal. xviii. 23.* that he considered his Ways, and *kept himself from his Iniquity*, which he was particularly prone to.

THERE are Advantages for Temptations lying often in Mens natural Tempers and Constitutions: Some are naturally gentle, easy to be intreated, pliable, which though it be the noblest Temper of Nature, yet if not watched over, will be a Means of innumerable Surprizals and Intanglements. Others are earthly, froward, morose; so that Envy, Malice, Selfishness, Peevishness, harsh Thoughts of others, Repinings, lie at the very Door of their Natures, and they can scarce step out, but they are in the Snare of one or other of them: Others are passionate, and the like. Now he that would watch that he enter not into Temptation, had need be acquainted with his own natural Temper; that he may watch over the Treacheries that lie in it continually; take Heed lest you have a *Jehu* in you, that shall make you drive furiously, or, a *Jonah* in you, that will make you ready to repine, or a *David* that will make you hasty in your Determinations as he was often in the Warmth of his natural Temper. He who watches not this thoroughly,

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who

who is not exactly skill'd in the Knowledge of himself, will never be disentangled from one Temptation or another.

AGAIN, as Men have peculiar natural Tempers, so Men may have peculiar Corruptions, which either by their natural Constitution or Education and other Prejudices, have got deep Rooting in them. This also is to be found out by him, who would not enter into Temptation. Unless he know it, unless his Eyes be always on it, unless he observes its Motions, Advantages, it will continually be entangling him. This then is our sixth Direction in this Kind; labour to know thine own Temper, what Spirit thou art of; what Associates in thy Heart *Satan* hath, where Corruption is strong, where Grace is weak. How many have all their Comforts blasted, and Peace disturbed, by natural Passion and Peevishness? How many are render'd useless in the World, by their own Gentleness and Facility? Be acquainted then with thine own Heart, tho' it be deep, search it: Though it be dark, enquire into it: Though it give all its Distempers other Names than what are their due, believe it not. Were not Men utter Strangers to themselves, did they not give flattering Titles to their natural Distempers, did they not strive rather to justify, palliate, or excuse the Evils of their Hearts, than to destroy them, it were impossible that they should all their Days hang in the same Briers without Attempt for Deliverance.

2. WHEN thou knowest the State and Condition of thy Heart, watch against all such Occasions, Employments, Companies, Retirements, Businessses, as are apt to entangle thy natural Temper, or provoke thy Corruption.

It may be, there are some Ways, some Companies, some Businesses, that thou never in thy Life escaped'st them, but suffered'st by them more or less, through their Suitableness to entice, or provoke thy Corruption. It may be thou art in a Condition of Life, that wearies thee Day by Day, on the Account of thy Ambition, Passion, Discontent; if thou hast any Love to thy Soul, it is Time for thee to awake, and to deliver thyself as a Bird from the evil Snare. *Peter* will not come again in Hast to the High-Priest's Hall, nor would *David* walk again in the Top of his House. But the Particulars of this Instance are so various, that it is impossible to enumerate them. Herein lies no small Part of that Wisdom, which consists in ordering our Conversation aright. Seeing we have so little Power over our Hearts, when once they meet with suitable Provocations, we are to keep them asunder, as a Man would do Fire and the combustible Parts of the House wherein he dwells.

3. BE sure to lay in Provision in Store, against the Approaching of any Temptation.

THIS also belongs to our Watchfulness over our Hearts. You will say, What Provision is intended, and where is it to be laid up? Our Hearts, as our Saviour speaks, are our Treasury. There we lay up whatever we have, good or bad; and thence do we draw it for our Use. When an Enemy draws nigh to a Fort to besiege it; often if he finds it well mann'd, and furnished with Provision for a Siege, he withdraws and assaults it not. If *Satan* the Prince of this World come, and find our Hearts fortified against his Batteries, he not only departs, but flies; he *will fly from us*, Jam. iv. 7. For the Provision to be laid up,
it

it is that which is provided in the Gospel for us. Gospel Provisions will do this Work; that is, keep the Heart full of a Sense of the Love of God in *Christ*: This is the greatest Preservative against the Power of Temptation. A Man may, nay he ought to lay in Provisions of the Law also; Fear of Death, Hell, Punishment, with the Terror of the LORD in them. But these are far more easily conquer'd than the other: Nay, they will never stand alone against a vigorous Assault. A Heart, stored with them will struggle for a while, but quickly give over. But store the Heart with a Sense of the Love of God in *Christ*; with a Taste of the Blood of *Christ*, and his Love in shedding it; get a Relish of the Privileges we have thereby; fill the Heart with Thoughts of the Beauty of Holiness, and thou wilt in an ordinary Course of Walking with God, have great Peace as to Temptations. The Apostle tells us, That the Peace of GOD *ῥοῦνηται τὰς καρδίας*, *Phil.* iv. vii. shall keep our Hearts; *ῥῥῥα*, is a military Word, a Garrison; and so *ῥοῦνηται*, is, *shall keep as in a Garrison*. Now a Garrison hath two Things attending it. *First*, That it is exposed to the Assaults of its Enemies. *Secondly*, That Safety lies in it from their Attempts. It is so with our Souls: They are exposed to Temptations, assaulted continually: But if there be a Garrison in them, Temptation shall not enter, and consequently we shall not enter into Temptation. Now how is this done? Saith he, the Peace of God shall do it: What is *this Peace of God*? A Sense of his Love and Favour in *Jesus Christ*. Let this abide in you, and it shall garrison you against all Assaults whatever: Besides, there is that in an especial Manner, which is also in all the rest of the Directions; namely, that the Thing itself lies in a direct Opposition to all the Ways that Temptation

tation can make Use of, to approach our Souls. Contending to obtain and keep a Sense of the Love of God in *Christ*, in the Nature of it, obviates all the Workings of Temptation. Let this be a third Direction then in our Watching against Temptation, lay in Store of Gospel Provisions, that may make the Soul a defended Place, against all the Assaults thereof.

4. IN the first Approach of any Temptation, these Directions following are also suited to carry on the Work of Watching.

(1.) BE always awake, that thou mayest have an early Discovery of thy Temptation; that thou mayest know it so to be. Most Men perceive not their Enemy, 'till they are wounded by him, Yea, others may sometimes see them deeply insensible; they sleep without any Sense of Danger, 'till others come and awake them, by telling them that their House is on Fire. Temptation is not easily discoverable, as it denotes such a Way, or Thing, as may be made Use of for the Ends of Temptation; few take Notice of it, until it is too late; and they find themselves entangled, if not wounded. Watch then, to understand betimes the Snares that are laid for thee; to understand the Advantages thy Enemies have against thee, before they get Strength; before they are incorporated with thy Lusts, and have distilled Poison into thy Soul.

(2.) CONSIDER the Aim and Tendency of the Temptation, whatever it be, and of all that are concerned in it. Those who concur in thy Temptation, are *Satan*, and thy own Lusts. Thine own Lust never rises up, but its Intendment is the worst of Evils. Hence look upon it in its first
At-

Attempts, what Pretences soever may be made, as thy mortal Enemy. Know then, that in the first Assault of any Temptation, the most cursed, sworn Enemy is at Hand, is setting on thee, and that for thy utter Ruin: So that it were the greatest Madness in the World, to throw thyself into his Arms, to be destroyed.

HATH *Satan* any more friendly Intention towards thee, who is a Sharer in every Temptation? To beguile thee as a Serpent, to devour thee as a Lion, is the Friendship that he owes thee. I shall only add, that the Sin he tempts thee to against the Law, it is not the Thing he aims at; his Design lies against thy Interest in the Gospel. He would make Sin but a Bridge, to get over to a better Ground to assault thee, as to thy Interest in *Christ*. He who perhaps will say to Day thou mayest venture on Sin, because thou hast an Interest in *Christ*; will To-morrow tell thee, that thou hast none, because thou hast done so.

(3.) MEET thy Temptation in its Entrance with Thoughts of Faith concerning *Christ* on the Cross: This will make it sink before thee. Entertain no Parley, no Dispute with it, if thou wouldest not enter into it. Say, it is *Christ* that died, that died for such Sins as these. This is *taking the Shield of Faith to quench the fiery Darts of Satan*, Eph. vi. 16. Faith doth it, by laying Hold on *Christ* crucified, his Love therein, and what from thence He suffer'd for Sin. Let thy Temptation be what it will; be it unto Sin, to fear or doubting for Sin, or about thy Condition, it is not able to stand before Faith lifting up the Standard of the Cross.

BUT

BUT suppose the Soul hath been surprized by Temptation, and entangled unawares, so that now it is too late to resist the first Entrances of it; What shall such a Soul do, that it be not plunged into it, and carried away with the Power thereof?

1. Do as *Paul* did; beseech God again and again, that it may *depart from thee*, and thou shalt either be speedily deliver'd out of it, or receive a Sufficiency of Grace, not to be foiled utterly by it.

2. FLY to *Christ* in a peculiar Manner, as He was tempted; and beg of Him to give thee Succour in this *needful Time of Trouble*, Heb. ii. 11. The Apostle instructs us herein, *In that He hath been tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted*: This is the Meaning of it; when you are tempted, and are ready to faint, when you want Succour, you must have it, or you die; exert Faith peculiarly on *Christ*, as He was tempted; that is, consider that He was tempted Himself, that He suffered thereby, that He conquer'd all Temptations, and that not merely on his own Account, seeing for our Sakes He submitted to be tempted; but for us, and draw, yea, expect Succour from Him, lye down at his Feet, make thy Complaint known to Him, beg his Assistance, and it will not be in vain.

3. Look to Him, who hath promised Deliverance; consider that He is faithful, and will not suffer thee to be tempted above what thou art able. Consider, that He hath promised a comfortable Issue of these Trials and Temptations. Call all the Promises to Mind, of Assistance and Deliverance: Ponder them in thy Heart, and rest upon it,

it, that GOD hath innumerable Ways that thou knowest not of, to give thee Deliverance; as,

(1.) HE can send an Affliction, that shall mortify thy Heart to the Temptation, whatever it be; that, which before was a sweet Morsel, shall neither have Taste or Relish in it, thy Desire to it shall be killed; as was the Case with *David*; or,

(2.) HE can by some Providence alter that whole State of Things, from whence thy Temptation doth arise; so taking Fuel from the Fire, causing it to go out of itself; as it was with the same *David* in the Day of Battle; or,

(3.) HE can tread down *Satan* under thy Feet, that he shall not dare to suggest any Thing any more, (the GOD of Peace shall do it) that thou shalt hear of him no more; or,

(4.) HE can give thee such Supply of Grace, that thou mayest be freed, though not from the Temptation itself, yet from the Danger of it, as was the Case with *Paul*; or,

(5.) HE can give thee such a comfortable Persuasion of good Success, that thou shalt have Refreshment in thy Trials, and be kept from the Trouble of the Temptation; or,

(6.) HE can utterly remove it, and make thee a compleat Conqueror. And innumerable other Ways He hath, of keeping thee from entering into Temptation, so as to be foiled by it.

4. CONSIDER where the Temptation, where-with thou art surprized, hath made its Entrance, and by what Means, and with all Speed make up that

that Breach : Stop that Passage which the Waters have made to enter in at. Deal with thy Soul like a wise Physician ; enquire when, how, by what Means thou fellest into this Distemper, and if thou findest Negligence, Carelessness, Want of keeping Watch over thyself, to have lain at the Bottom of it, fix thy Soul there ; bewail that before the LORD ; make up that Breach, and then proceed to the Work that lies before thee.



C H A P. VI.

The last general DIRECTION, watch against Temptation, by constant keeping the Word of Christ's Patience.

ONE general Direction remains, which is comprehensive of all that went before, and also adds many more Particulars unto them ; this contains an approved Antidote against the Poison of Temptation ; a Remedy that *Christ* Himself hath marked with a Note of Efficacy and Success. It is given, *Rev. iii. 10.* in the Words of our Saviour Himself to the Church of *Philadelphia*. *Because thou hast kept the Word of my Patience, I will also keep thee from the Hour of Temptation, which shall come upon all the World, to try them that dwell in the Earth ;* Christ is the same Yesterday, To-day and forever ; as He dealt with the Church of *Philadelphia*, so will He deal with us ; if we keep the Word of his Patience, He will keep us from the Hour of Temptation. This then requires our peculiar Consideration.

AND therefore I shall shew, 1. What it is to keep the Word of *Christ's* Patience. And, 2. How this will be a Means of our Preservation.

1. THE Word of *Christ* is the Word of the Gospel; the Word by Him revealed from the Bosom of the Father. This Word is called the *Word of Christ's Patience*, upon the Account of that Patience and Long-suffering which in the Dispensation of it, the LORD *Christ* exerciseth both in his bearing with Men, and enduring from them.

THREE Things are implied in keeping this Word.

[1.] KNOWLEDGE. [2.] Valuation. [3.] Obedience.

[1.] KNOWLEDGE, he that will keep this Word, must know it.

- 1.) As a Word of Grace.
- 2.) As a Word of Holiness.
- 3.) As a Word of Liberty.
- 4.) As a Word of Consolation.

1.) As a Word of Grace, and Mercy able to save us: *It is the Power of GOD unto Salvation*, Rom. i. 19. *The Grace of GOD that bringeth Salvation*, Titus ii. 11. *The Word of Grace*, that is able to build us up, and to give us an Inheritance among all them that are sanctified, Acts xx. 32. When the Word of the Gospel is known, as a Word of Mercy, Grace, and Pardon, as the sole Evidence

Evidence for Life, as the Conveyance of an eternal Inheritance, when the Soul finds it such, it will strive to keep it.

2.) As a Word of Holiness and Purity able to sanctify him; *Ye are clean through the Word I have spoken to you*, saith our Saviour, *John xv. 3.* To that Purpose is his Prayer, *John xvii. 17.* He that knows not the Word of *Christ's* Patience, as a sanctifying, cleansing Word upon his own Soul; neither knows it, nor keeps it.

3.) As a Word of Liberty and Power, to set him free; and this not only from the Guilt of Sin and Wrath, for that it doth, as it is a Word of Grace and Mercy; not only from the Power of Sin, for that it doth as it is a Word of Holiness, but also from all outward Respects of Men, or the World, that might entangle or enslave him; it declares us to be *Christ's* Freemen, and in Bondage unto none. We are not by it freed from due Subjection to Superiors, nor from any Duty, nor to any Sin, *1 Pet. ii. 16.* but in two Respects, it is a Word of Freedom, Liberty, and Deliverance from Bondage.

(1. In Respect of Conscience, as to the Worship of God, *Gal. v. 1.*

(2. In Respect of ignoble, slavish Respects to the Men, or Things of the World, the Gospel gives a free, large and noble Spirit in Subjection to God, and none else; there is administred in it a Spirit *not of Fear, but of Power and of Love, and of a sound Mind*, *2 Tim. i. 7.* A Mind in nothing terrified, *Phil. i. 28.* not swayed with any bye Respect. And he that thus knows the Word of

Christ's Patience, is even thereby freed from innumerable, from unspeakable Temptations.

4.) As a Word of Consolation to support him in every Condition; and to be a full Portion in the Want of all. It is a Word attended with Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory; it gives Support, Refreshment, Peace, Consolation in every Condition. Thus to know the Word of *Christ's* Patience, thus to know the Gospel, is the first Part, and it is a great Part of this Condition of our Preservation from the Hour and Power of Temptation.

[2.] VALUATION of what is thus known, belongs to the Keeping of this Word, it is to be kept as a *Treasure*, 2 *Tim.* i. 14. τὴν καλὴν παρακατὰ θείαν, that excellent *Depositum*, that is, the Word of the Gospel, *keep it*, saith the Apostle, *by the Holy Ghost*; and, *hold fast the faithful Word*, *Tit.* i. 9. It is a good *Treasure*, a faithful Word, hold it fast. It is a Word that comprizes the whole Interest of *Christ* in the World. To value that as our chief *Treasure*, is to keep the Word of *Christ's* Patience.

[3.] OBEDIENCE; personal Obedience, in the universal Observation of all the Commands of *Christ*, is the Keeping of his Word. Close Adherence unto *Christ* in Holiness, and universal Obedience, when the Opposition the Gospel doth meet with, doth render it signally the Word of his Patience, is the Life and Soul of the Duty required.

WE are arrived then to the Sum of this Condition of Freedom from the Power of Temptation; he that having a due Acquaintance with the Gospel, as a Word of Mercy, Holiness, Liberty and
Con-

Consolation, values it as his choicest Treasure; makes it his Business, and the Work of his Life, to give himself up to it in universal Obedience, then especially, when Opposition and Apostacy put the Patience of *Christ* to the utmost, he shall be preserved from the Hour of Temptation.

THIS is that which is comprehensive of all that went before; and is exclusive of all other Ways for obtaining the End proposed; nor let any Man think without this, to be kept one Hour from entering into Temptation.

2. THAT this will be a sure Preservative, may appear, from the ensuing Considerations:

(1.) IT hath the Promise of Preservation, and this alone hath so. It is solemnly promised to the Church of *Philadelphia* on this Account.

Now in every Promise there are three Things to be considered.

[1.] THE Faithfulness of the Father who gives it.

[2.] THE Grace of the Son which is the Matter of it.

[3.] THE Power and Efficacy of the Holy Ghost which puts the Promise in Execution. And all these are engaged for the Preservation of such Persons from the Hour of Temptation.

(2.) THIS constant, universal Keeping of *Christ's* Word of Patience, will keep the Heart and Soul in a Frame, wherein no prevalent Temptation, by Virtue of any Advantages what-

whatever can seize upon it, so as totally to prevail against it. This exercises Grace in all the Faculties of the Soul; and compasses it with the whole Armour of God: The Understanding is full of Light, the Affections of Love; let the Wind blow from what Quarter it will, the Soul is fortified; let the Enemy assault when, or by what Means he pleaseth, all Things in the Soul are upon the Guard: Especially upon a two-fold Account, doth Deliverance and Security arise from this Hand.

[1.] BY the Mortification of the Heart to the Matter of Temptations. The Prevalency of any Temptation arises from hence, that the Heart is ready to close with the Matter of it. There are Lusts within, suited to the Proposals of the World, or *Satan* without. Now keeping the Word of *Christ's* Patience, in the Manner declared, keeps the Heart mortified to these Things. *I am crucified with Christ*; he that keeps close to *Christ*, is crucified with Him; and is dead to all the Desires of the Flesh and the World: Here the Match is broken, and all Love, entangling Love dissolved.

[2.] IN this Frame the Heart is filled with better Things, and so fortified against the Matter of any Temptation. See what Resolution this puts *Paul* upon, *Phil. iii. 8. All is Loss and Dung* to him. Who would go out of his Way, to have his Arms full of Loss and Dung? And whence is it, that he hath this Estimation of the most desirable Things in the World? It is from that dear Estimation he had of the Excellency of *Christ*; when the Soul is exercised to Communion with *Christ*, Walking with Him; he drinks new Wine, and cannot desire the old Things of the World, for he says the New is better. He Tastes every Day how
gracious

gracious the LORD is, and therefore longs not after the Sweetness of forbidden Things. He that makes it his Business to eat daily of the Tree of Life, will have no Appetite unto other Fruit, though the Tree that bare them seem to stand in the Midst of Paradise.

(3.) HE that so keeps the Word of *Christ's* Patience, is always furnished with preserving Considerations, and preserving Principles.

[1.] HE is furnished with preserving Considerations, that powerfully influence his Soul in Walking diligently with *Christ*. Besides the Sense of Duty which is always upon him, he considers,

1.) THE Concern of *Christ*, whom his Soul loves. He considers that the Presence of *Christ* is with him, his Eye upon him, that he ponders his Heart and Ways, as one greatly concerned in his Deportment, in a Time of Trial. So *Christ* manifests Himself to do, *Rev. ii. 19, 20.* He considers all; what is acceptable, what is to be rejected: He knows that *Christ* is concerned in his Honour, that his Name be not evil spoken of by Reason of him; that He is concerned in Love to his Soul; having that Design upon him to present him Holy, and Unblameable, and Unreproveable in his Sight; concerned on the Account of this Gospel, the Progress and Acceptation of it in the World; its Beauty would be slurred, its good Things reviled, its Progress stopped, if such an one be prevailed against; concerned in his Love to others, who are grievously scandalized, and perhaps ruined by the Mis-carriages of such. There is no Man who keeps the Word of the Patience of *Christ*, but is full of this pressing Consideration, it dwells on his Heart and Spirit,

Spirit, and the Love of *Christ* constrains him so to keep his Heart and Ways.

2.) THE Consideration of the Temptations of *Christ* in his Behalf, and the Conquest He made in all Assaults, dwell also on his Spirit. The Prince of this World came upon Him, every Thing in Earth or Hell, that hath either Allurement or Affrightment in it, was proposed to Him, to divert Him from the Work of Mediation, which He had undertaken: His whole Life He calls the Time of his Temptation; but He resisted all, conquered all, and is become a Captain of Salvation to them that obey Him. And, says the Soul, shall this Temptation, these Arguings, this plausible Pretence, this Sloth, this Self-love, this Sensuality, this Bait of the World, turn me aside, prevail over me, to desert Him who went before me, in the Ways of all Temptations that his holy Nature was obnoxious to, for my Good?

3.) THOUGHTS of the Loss of Love, of the Smiles of the Countenance of *Christ*, frequently exercise such a Soul. He knows what it is to enjoy the Favour of *Christ*, to have a Sense of his Love, to converse with Him; and perhaps knows also, what it is to be in the Dark, distanced from Him.

[2.] HE that keeps the Word of *Christ's* Patience, hath preserving Principles, whereby he is acted.

1.) IN all Things he lives by Faith. Now upon a twofold Account hath Faith, the Power of Preservation from Temptation annexed to it.

(1. BECAUSE it empties the Soul of its own Wisdom, Understanding and Fulness, that it may act

act in the Wisdom and Fulness of *Christ*. The only Advice for Preservation in Trials and Temptations lies in that of the wise Man, *Prov. iii. 5. Trust in the LORD with all thine Heart, and lean not to thine own Understanding.* This is the Work of Faith: The great Falling of Men in Trials, is their leaning to their own Understanding. What is the Issue of it? *Job xviii. 7. The Steps of his Strength shall be straightned, and his own Counsel shall cast him down.* First he shall be entangled, and then cast down; and all by his own Counsel, until he come to be ashamed of it; when ever in our Trials, we consult our own Understandings, the Principle of Living by Faith is stifled, and we shall in the Issue be cast down by our own Counsels. Now nothing can empty the Heart of this, but Faith, not living to ourselves, but having *Christ* to live in us.

(2. FAITH, making the Soul poor, empty, helpless in its self, engages the Power of *Jesus Christ*, for Assistance.

2.) LOVE to the Saints, with Care that they suffer not upon our Account, is a great preserving Principle in a Time of Temptation. How powerful this was in *David*, he declares in that earnest Prayer, *Psal. lxxix. 6. Let not them that wait on Thee, O LORD GOD of Hosts, be ashamed for my sake. Let not those that seek Thee be confounded for my sake, O GOD of Israel.* O let not me so miscarry, that those for whom I would lay down my Life, should be put to Shame, be Evil spoken of.

WOULD you then be kept from the Hour of Temptation, would you watch against entering into it, as Deductions from what hath been delivered in this Chapter, take the ensuing Cautions.

I. TAKE Heed of leaning on deceitful Assistances ; As,

(1.) ON your own Counsels, Understandings, Reasonings, though you argue in them never so plausibly, they will leave you, betray you ; when the Temptation comes to any Height, they will all turn and take Part with your Enemy, and plead as much for the Matter of the Temptation, as they pleaded against it before.

(2.) THE most vigorous Actings by Prayer, Fasting, and other such Means against that particular Temptation, wherewith you are exercised. This will not avail you, if in the mean Time there be Neglects on other Accounts : To hear a Man wrestle, cry, contend as to any particular Temptation, and immediately fall into worldly Ways, worldly Compliances, Looseness, and Negligence in other Things : It is Righteous with *Jesus Christ* to leave such an one to the Hour of Temptation.

(3.) THE general Security of Saints Perseverance, and Preservation from total Apostasy. Every Security that GOD gives us, is good in its Kind, and for the Purpose for which it is given to us ; but when it is given for one End, to use it for another, that is not good or profitable. To make Use of the general Assurance of Preservation from total Apostasy, to support the Spirit in a particular Temptation, will not advantage the Soul. Many relieve themselves with this, until they find themselves in the Depth of Perplexities.

2. APPLY yourselves to this great Preservation of faithful keeping the Word of *Christ's* Patience, in the Midst of all Temptations.

IF you Neglect this, it being the only Means prescribed by our Saviour, you will certainly enter into Temptation, and as certainly fall into Sin: Flatter not your selves; some of you are old Disciples, you think it impossible you should ever be seduced; but, *Let him (who ever he be) that standeth take Heed lest he fall*: It is not any Grace received, it is not any Experience obtained, that will preserve you from any Evil, unless you stand upon your Watch: *What I say to you, says Christ, I say to all; Watch.* Perhaps you may have had some good Success for a Time, in your careless Frame; but awake, admire God's Tenderneſs and Patience, or Evil lies at the Door. If you will not perform this Duty, in one Thing or other, you will be tempted, you will be defiled, and what will be the End thereof?

THIS may seem but as a Noise of Words for the present, but if ever it be thy Condition, thou wilt find it to be full of Woe and Bitterneſs: O! then let us strive to keep our Spirits unintangled, avoiding all Appearance of Evil, and all Ways leading thereto: Especially all Ways, Buſineſſes and Employments, that we have already found Diſadvantageous to us.



X P I E T O Λ O Γ I A :

OR, A

DECLARATION

OF THE

GLORIOUS MYSTERY

OF THE

PERSON of *CHRIST*,

G O D and M A N.

~~~~~  
*Yea, doubtless, and I count all Things but Loss for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my LORD; for whom I have suffered the Loss of all Things, and do count them but Dung that I may win Christ, Phil. iii. 8.*

X P I E T O A O T T A

O F A

# DECLARATION

OF THE

GLORIOUS MYSTERY



PERSO

GOD and MAN

~~~~~  
I, *James Smith*, and I count all things but loss for
the *Evangelium* of the Kingdom of Christ Jesus
my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of
all things, and do count them but dung that I
may win Christ, Phil. iii. 8.

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# THE P R E F A C E.

*IT is a great Promise concerning the Person of Christ, as He was to be given unto the Church, (for he was a Child born, a Son given unto us, Isa. ix. 6.) that God would lay Him in Zion for a Foundation, a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious Corner-Stone, a sure Foundation, whereon he that believeth, shall not make Haste, Isa. xxviii. 16. Yet was it also foretold concerning Him, That this precious Foundation should be for a Stone of Stumbling, and for a Rock of Offence, to both the Houses of Israel; for a Gin, and for a Snare unto the Inhabitants of Jerusalem. So as that many among them should stumble and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken, Isa. viii. 15. According to this Promise and Prediction, it hath fallen out in all Ages of the Church, as the Apostle Peter declares concerning the, first of them: Wherefore, saith he, also it was contained in the Scripture, Behold I lay in Zion a chief Corner-Stone, elect and precious, and he that believeth on Him, shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe, He is precious; but unto them that are dis-*

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obedient

## The PREFACE.

obedient, the Stone which the Builders disallowed, the same is made the Head of the Corner, and a Stone of Stumbling, and a Rock of Offence, even unto them that stumble at the Word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed, 1 Epist. chap. ii. 6, 7, 8.

UNTO them that believe unto the saving of the Soul, He is, He always hath been precious; the Sun, the Rock, the Life, the Bread of their Souls, every Thing that is good, useful, amiable, desirable here or unto Eternity. In, from, and by Him, is all their spiritual and eternal Life, Light, Power, Growth, Consolation and Joy here, with everlasting Salvation hereafter. By Him alone do they desire, expect and obtain Deliverance from that woful Apostacy from GOD, which is accompanied withal, which containeth in it virtually and meritoriously, whatever is evil, noxious and destructive unto our Nature, and which without Relief will issue in eternal Misery. By Him are they brought into the nearest Alliance and Friendship with GOD, the firmest Union unto Him, and the most holy Communion with Him, that our finite Natures are capable of, and so conducted unto the eternal Enjoyment of Him. For in Him shall all the Seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory, Isa. xlv. 25. For Israel shall be saved in the LORD, with an everlasting Salvation, they shall not be ashamed nor confounded World without End, ver. 17.

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ON these and the like Accounts, the principal Design of their whole Lives unto whom He is thus precious, is to acquaint themselves with Him, the Mystery of the Wisdom, Grace and Love of GOD, in his Person and Mediation as revealed unto us in the Scripture, which is Life eternal, *John xvii. 3.* to trust in Him, and unto Him, as to all the everlasting Concernments of their Souls, to love and honour Him with all their Hearts, to endeavour after Conformity unto Him, in all those Characters of Divine Goodness and Holiness, which are represented unto them in Him. In these Things consist the Soul, Life, Power, Beauty and Efficacy of the Christian Religion, without which, whatever outward Ornaments may be put upon its Exercise, it is but an useless, lifeless Carcass. The whole of this Design is expressed in those heavenly Words of the Apostle, *Phil. iii. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.* Yea doubtless, and I count all Things but Loss, for the Excellency of the Knowledge of *Christ Jesus my LORD*; for whom I have suffered the Loss of all Things, and do count them but Dung, that I might win *Christ* and be found in Him, not having mine own Righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is thro' the Faith of *Christ*, the Righteousness which is of GOD by Faith. That I may know Him, and the Power of his Resurrection, and the Fellowship of his Sufferings, being made conformable unto his Death; if by any Means



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I might attain unto the Resurrection of the Dead: Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I also am apprehended of Christ Jesus. This is a divine Expression of that Frame of Heart, of that Design which is predominant and efficacious in them unto whom Christ is precious.

BUT on the other Hand, according unto the forementioned Prediction, as He hath been a sure Foundation unto all that believe, so He hath in like Manner been a Stone of Stumbling, and a Rock of Offence unto them that stumble at the Word. There is nothing in Him, nothing wherein He is concerned, nothing of Him, his Person, his Natures, his Office, his Grace, his Love, his Power, his Authority, his Relation unto the Church, but it hath been unto many a Stone of Stumbling, and a Rock of Offence. Concerning these Things have been all the Contests, which have fallen out among those that outwardly have made Profession of the Christian Religion. And the Contentions about them do rather encrease than abate, unto this very Day; the dismal Fruits whereof the World groaneth under, and is no longer able to bear. For as the Opposition unto the LORD Christ in these Things by Men of perverse Minds, hath ruined their own Souls, as having dashed themselves in Pieces against this everlasting Rock; so in Conjunction with others Lusts and Interests

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rests of the carnal Minds of Men, it hath filled the World itself with Blood and Confusion.

THE re-throning of the Person, Spirit, Grace and Authority of Christ in the Hearts and Consciences of Men, is the only Way whereby an End may be put unto these Conflicts. But this is not to be expected in any Degree of Perfection amongst them who stumble at this Stone of Offence, though in the Issue He will herein also send forth Judgment unto Victory, and all the Meek of the Earth shall follow after it. In the mean Time, as those unto whom He is thus a Rock of Offence, in his Person, his Spirit, his Grace, his Office and Authority, are diligent under various Pretences, and for divers Ends, in all Ways of Opposition unto his Glory; so it is the highest Duty of them unto whom He is precious, whose principal Design is to be found built on Him as the sure Foundation; as to hold the Truth concerning Him, his Person, Spirit, Grace, Office and Authority, and to abound in all Duties of Faith, Love, Trust, Honour and Delight in Him; so also to declare his Excellency, to plead the Cause of his Glory, to vindicate his Honour, and to witness Him the only Rest and Reward of the Souls of Men, as they are called and have Opportunity.

THIS and no other is the Design of the ensuing TREATISE, wherein as all Thing fall unspeakably short of the Excellency and Sublimity

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ty of the Subject treated of, for no Mind can conceive, no Tongue can express the real substantial Glory of them; so there is no Doubt but that in all the Parts of it, there is a Reflection of Failings and Imperfections from the Weakness of its Author. But yet I must say with Confidence, that in the whole, that eternal Truth of GOD concerning the Mystery of his Wisdom, Love, Grace and Power, in the Person and Mediation of CHRIST, with our Duties towards Himself therein, even the Father, Son, and Eternal Spirit, is pleaded and vindicated, which shall never be shaken by the utmost Endeavours of the Gates of Hell.

AND in the Acknowledgement of the Truth concerning these Things consists that Faith in an especial Manner, which was the Life and Glory of the Primitive Church, which they earnestly contended for, whereby they were victorious against all the Troops of Adversaries, by whom it was assaulted. In giving Testimony hereunto, they loved not their Lives unto Death, but poured out their Blood like Water, under all the Pagan Persecutions, which had no other Design but to cast them down and separate them from this impregnable Rock. In the Defence of these Truths did they conflict in Prayers, Studies, Travels and Writings, against the Swarms of Seducers, by whom they were opposed. And for this Cause I thought to have confirmed the principal Passages of the ensuing



## The PREFACE.

*fu*ing Discourse with some Testimonies from the most antient Writers of the first Ages of the Church; but I omitted that Course, as fearing that the Interposition of such Passages might obstruct instead of promoting the Edification of the common Sort of Readers, which I principally intended.



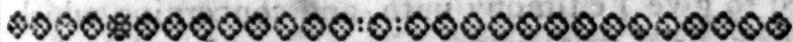
THE PREFACE.

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XΡΙΣΤΟΛΟΓΙΑ:  
OR, A  
DECLARATION  
OF THE  
GLORIOUS MYSTERY  
OF THE  
Person of CHRIST, &c.



CHAP. I.

PETER'S *Confession*, Matt. xvi. 16. *The Substance and Excellency of that Confession.*

OUR blessed Saviour enquiring of his Disciples their Apprehensions concerning his *Person*, and their Faith in Him, *Simon Peter*, as he was usually the forwardest on all such Occasions, through his peculiar Endowments of Faith and Zeal, returns an Answer in the Name of them all, Matt. xvi. 16. *And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art Christ the Son of the living GOD.*

THIS



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THIS short, but illustrious Confession of *Peter*, comprizeth eminently the whole Truth concerning the *Person* and *Office* of *Christ*. Of his *Person*, in that although He was the *Son of Man*, under which Appellation He made his Enquiry, (*Whom do Men say that I the Son of Man am?*) Yet was He not only so, but the eternal Son of the living God. Of his *Office*, that He was the *Christ*, He whom God had anointed to be the Saviour of the Church, in the Discharge of his kingly, priestly and prophetic Power. And it is manifest, that all divine Truths have such a Concatenation among themselves, and do all of them so center in the *Person* of *Christ*, as vested with his Offices towards the Church, that they are all virtually comprized in this Confession.

THIS Confession therefore, as containing the Sum and Substance of that Faith, which they were called to give Testimony unto, and concerning which their Trial was approaching, is approved by our Saviour: And not only so, but eminent Privileges are granted unto Him that made it, and in Him unto the whole Church, that should live in the same Faith and Confession, ver. 17, 18. *And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jonah, for Flesh and Blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this Rock will I build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.*

Two Things doth our Saviour consider in the Answer returned to his Enquiry. (1.) The Faith of *Peter* in this Confession, the Faith of him that made it. (2.) The Nature and Truth of the Confession; both which are required in all the Disciples of *Christ*; For with the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness, and

and with the Mouth Confession is made unto Salvation,  
Rom. x. 10.

THE first Thing which He speaks unto, is the Faith of Peter, who made this Confession; without this no outward Confession is of any Use. That which gives Glory unto GOD in any Confession, and which gives us an Interest in the Truth confessed, is the *Believing of the Heart*, which is unto Righteousness. With Respect hereunto, the LORD Christ speaks, ver. 17. *And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona, for Flesh and Blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven.*

HE commends and sets forth the Faith of Peter, (1.) From its *Effect*. (2.) From its *Cause*. Its *Effect* is, that it made him *blessed* in whom it was. For it is not only a blessed Thing to believe and know *Jesus Christ*, as it is called *Life eternal*, John xvii. 3. But it is that which gives an immediate Interest in the blessed State of Justification, and Acceptance with GOD, *John i. 12.* (2.) The immediate *Cause* of this Faith is divine Revelation. It is not the Effect of our own Abilities, the best of which are but *Flesh and Blood*. That Faith which renders them blessed in whom it is, is wrought in them, by the Power of GOD revealing *Christ* unto their Souls.

2. HE speaks unto the *Confession* itself, acquainting his Disciples with the Nature and Use of it, which from the Beginning He principally designed, ver. 18. *And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this Rock will I build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.*

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IT is not the Person of *Peter* who confessed *Christ*, but the *Person of Christ* whom *Peter* confessed, that is the *Rock* on whom the Church is built.

1. THE Variation of the Expressions proves undeniably that our Saviour intended we should not understand the *Person of Peter* to be the *Rock*. He takes Occasion from his Name to declare what He designed, but no more. *And I say unto thee, thou art Peter.* He had given him this Name before, at his first Calling, *John i. 42.* Now He gives the Reason of his so doing, namely, because of the illustrious Confession, that he should make of the Rock of the Church. As the Name of God under the Old Testament, was called on Persons, and Things, and Places, because of some especial Relation unto Him. Wherefore the Expression is varied on Purpose to declare, that whatever be the Signification of the Name of *Peter*, yet the Person so called was not the Rock intended. The Words are  $\Sigma\upsilon \epsilon\acute{\iota} \Pi\acute{\epsilon}\tau\tau\omicron\varsigma, \kappa\acute{\iota} \epsilon\pi\acute{\iota} \tau\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta \tau\eta \Pi\acute{\epsilon}\tau\tau\epsilon\alpha.$  Had He intended the *Person of Peter*, He would have expressed it plainly,  $\Sigma\upsilon \epsilon\acute{\iota} \Pi\acute{\epsilon}\tau\tau\omicron\varsigma, \kappa\acute{\iota} \epsilon\pi\acute{\iota} \sigma\omicron\iota;$  *Thou art a Rock, and on thee will I build.* At least the Gender had not been altered, but he would have said,  $\epsilon\pi\acute{\iota} \tau\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta \tau\eta \Pi\acute{\epsilon}\tau\tau\epsilon\omega,$  which would have given some Colour to this Imagination.

2. IF the Church was built on the *Person of Peter*, then when he died the Church must utterly fail. For no Building can possibly abide when its Foundation is removed and taken away.

3. THERE is but one *Rock*, but one Foundation. There is no Mention in the Scripture of two Rocks of the Church. And the Rock and the Foundation are the same; for the Rock is that whereon the Church is built, that is, the Foundation.



tion. But that the *LORD Christ* is this single Rock and Foundation of the Church, we shall prove immediately.

4. IMMEDIATELY after this Declaration of our Saviour's Purpose to build his Church on the Rock, He reveals unto his Disciples the *Way and Manner* how He would lay its Foundation, namely, in his Death and Sufferings, *v. 21.* And thereon this *supposed Rock*, being a little left unto his own Stability, shewed Himself to be but a *Reed shaken with the Wind*: For he is so far from putting himself under the Weight of the Building, that he attempts an Obstruction of its Foundation. *He began to Rebuke Christ Himself* for mentioning his Sufferings, wherein alone the Foundation of the Gospel-church was to be laid, *ver. 22.* And hereon he received the severest Rebuke that ever the *LORD Jesus* gave unto any of his Disciples, *ver. 23.* And so it is known that afterwards, through Surprizal and Temptation, he did what lay in him to *recall that Confession* which here he made, and whereon the Church was to be built.

THE Substance of the great *Mystery*, contained in the Attestation given by our Saviour unto the Confession of *Peter*, and the Promise thereunto annexed, may be comprized in the ensuing Assertions.

1. THE *Person of Christ*, the Son of the living GOD, as vested with his Offices, whereunto He was called and anointed, is the Foundation of the Church, the *Rock* whereon it is built.

2. THE *Power and Policy of Hell* will be always engaged in Opposition to this Foundation.

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3. *THE Church that is built on this Rock, shall never be dis-jointed from it, or prevailed against by the Opposition of the Gates of Hell.*

THE two former of these I shall speak briefly unto, my principal Design being a Demonstration of a Truth that ariseth from the Consideration of them all.

THE Foundation of the Church is twofold. (1.) *Real.* (2.) *Doctrinal.* And in both Ways *Christ* alone is the Foundation. The *real* Foundation of the Church He is, by Virtue of the mystical Union of it unto Him, with all the Benefits whereof from thence, and thereby it is made Partaker. For thence alone hath it spiritual Life, Grace, Mercy, Perfection and Glory, *Ephes.* iv. 15, 16. *Col.* ii. 19. And He is the *doctrinal* Foundation of it, in that the Faith or Doctrine concerning Him and his Offices, is that divine Truth which, in a peculiar Manner, animates and constitutes the Church of the New Testament, *Ephes.* ii. 19, 20, 21, 22. Without the Faith and Confession hereof, no one Person belongs unto that Church.

THAT the LORD *Christ* is thus the Foundation of the Church, is testified unto, *Isa.* xxviii. 16. *Thus saith the LORD GOD, Behold I lay in Zion for a Foundation a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious Corner-stone, a sure Foundation: He that believeth, shall not make haste.* The Interpretation and Application of the last Words of this Promise by the Apostles is, *He that believes on Him, shall not be ashamed or confounded,* *Rom.* ix. 33. chap. x. 11. *1 Pet.* ii. 6. That is, he shall be eternally saved; which it is the highest Blasphemy to apply unto any other but *Jesus Christ* alone. He therefore is alone that *Foundation* which GOD hath lain in and of the Church.

Church. But this fundamental Truth of *Christ* being the only Foundation of the Church, is so expressly determined by the Apostle *St. Paul*, as not to need any farther Confirmation, *1 Cor. iii. 11.* *For other Foundation can no Man lay, but that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*



## C H A P. II.

### *Opposition made unto the Church as built on the PERSON of CHRIST.*

**T**HERE are in the Words of our Saviour unto *Peter*, concerning the *Foundation of the Church*, a Promise of its Preservation, and a Prediction of the Opposition that should be made thereunto. And accordingly all Things are come to pass, and are carrying on towards a complete Accomplishment. For (that we may begin with the Opposition foretold) the *Power and Policy of Hell* ever were, and ever will be engaged in *Opposition unto the Church built on this Foundation*; that is, the Faith of it concerning his Person, Office, and Grace, whereby it is built on Him. This, as to what is past, concerneth the Matter of Fact; whereof therefore I must give a brief Account; and then we shall examine what Evidences we have of the same Endeavour at present.

THE *Gates of Hell*, as all agree, are the Power and Policy of it; or the Actings of *Satan*, both as a *Lion* and as a *Serpent*, by Rage and by Subtilty. But whereas in these Things he acts not visibly in



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his own Person, but by his Agents, he hath always had two Sorts of them employed in his Service. By the one he executes his *Rage*, and by the other his *Craft*; he animates the one as a *Lion*, the other as a *Serpent*: In the one he acts as the *Dragon*, in the other as the *Beast that had two Horns like the Lamb, but speaks like the Dragon*. The first is the unbelieving World; the other, Apostates and Seducers of all Sorts. Wherefore his Work in this Kind is of a double Nature; the one an Effect of his Power and Rage, acted by the World in Persecution; the other of his Policy and Craft, acted by Hereticks in Seduction. In both he designs to separate the Church from its Foundation.

THE Opposition of the first Sort he began against the Person of *Christ* immediately in his human Nature. *Fraud* he first attempted in his Temptation, *Matth. iv.* but quickly found that that Way he could make no Approach unto Him. *The Prince of this World came, but had nothing in him*. Wherefore he betook himself unto *open Force*, and by all Means possible sought his Destruction; so also the more at any Time the Church is by Faith and Watchfulness secured against Seduction, the more doth *Satan* rage against it in open Persecution. And for the Example and Comfort of the Church, in its Conformity to *Christ*, no Means were left unattempted that might instigate and prepare the World for his Ruin. Reproaches, Scorn, false Accusations by his Suggestions, were heaped on him on every Hand. Hereby in the whole Course of his Ministry He endured the Contradiction of Sinners against Himself, *Heb. xii. 3.* And there is herein blessed Provision made for all those who by Faith make Use of his Example. He calls them to *take up his Cross* and follow Him; and He hath shewed them what is in it by his own bearing of it. Contempt, Reproach, despiteful

despiteful Usage, Calumnies, false Accusations, wresting his Words, blaspheming his Doctrine, reviling his Person, all that He said and did, encompassed Him all his Days. And He hath assured his Followers, that *such and no other*, at least for the most Part, shall be their Lot in this World. And some in all Ages have an Experience of it in an eminent Manner. But have they any Reason to complain? Why should the *Servant* look for better Measure than the *Master* met with? To be made like unto Him in the worst of Evils, for his Sake, is the most honourable Condition in this World. GOD help some to believe it. Hereby was Way made for his Death. But in the Whole it was manifested how infinitely in all his Subtilty and Malice *Satan* falls short of the Contrivances of divine Wisdom and Power. For all that he attained by effecting his Death, in the *Hour of Darknes*, was but the *Destruction of his own Works*, with the Ruin of his Kingdom; and what yet remainsto consummate his eternal Misery, he shall himself work out in his Opposition to the Church. His restless Malice will not suffer him to give over the Pursuit, until nothing remains to give him a full Entrance into endless Torments.

No sooner did the *Church of the New Testament* begin to arise on this Foundation, but the whole World of *Jews* and *Gentiles* set themselves with open Force to destroy it: And all that they contended with the Church about was their Faith, and Confession of it, that *Jesus was the Christ the Son of the living GOD*. This Foundation they would cast it from, or exterminate it out of the Earth. What were the Endeavours of the *Gates of Hell* in this Kind, with what Height of Rage, with what bloody and inhuman Cruelties they were exercised and executed, we have some obscure Remembrance  
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in the Stories that remain from the *Martyrdom* of Stephen unto the Days of *Constantine*. But altho' there be enough remaining upon Record, to give us a View of the insatiable Malice of the *old Murderer*, and an astonishing Representation of human Nature, degenerating into his Image, in the Perpetration of all horrid, inhuman Cruelties, yet is it all as nothing in Comparison of that Prospect which the last Day will give of them, when the Earth shall disclose all the Blood that it hath received, and the righteous Judge shall lay open all the Contrivances for its Effusion, with the Rage and Malice wherewith they were attended. The same Rage continueth yet unallayed in its Principles; and although God in many Places restrain it up in his Providence, by the Circumstances of human Affairs, yet as it hath the least Advantage, as it finds any Door open, it endeavours to act itself in lesser or higher Degrees. But whatever dismal Appearance of Things there may be in the World, we need not fear the Ruin of the Church by the most bloody Oppositions. Former Experiences will give Security against future Events. It is built on the Rock, and those *Gates of Hell* shall not prevail against it.

THE second Way whereby *Satan* attempted the same End, and yet continueth so to do, was by *pernicious Errors and Heresies*: For all the Heresies wherewith the Church was assaulted for some *Centuries*, were Oppositions unto their Faith in the Person of *Christ*. I shall briefly reflect on the Heads of this Opposition, because they are now lifting up themselves again, though under new Vizards and Pretences. They were of three Sorts.

I. THAT which introduced other Doctrines and Notions of divine Things, absolutely exclusive of the



the *Person and Mediation of Christ*. Such was that of the *Gnosticks*, begun as it is supposed by *Simon the Magician*. A Sort of People they were, with whom the first Churches, after the Decease of the Apostles, were exceedingly pestered, and the Faith of many was overthrown. For instead of *Christ*, and *GOD* in Him reconciling the World unto Himself, and the Obedience of Faith thereon according to the Gospel, they introduced *endless Fables, Genealogies, and Conjugations of Deities*, which practically issued in this, that *Christ* was such an *Emanation of Light and Knowledge in them*, as made them perfect; that is, it took away all Differences of Good and Evil, and gave them Liberty to do what they pleased. This was the first Way that *Satan* attempted the Faith of the Church, namely, by substituting a *perfecting Light and Knowledge* in the Room of the Person of *Christ*; and, for ought I know, it may be one of the last Ways whereby he will endeavour the Accomplishment of the same Design.

2. SATAN attempted the same Work by them who *denied his divine Nature*, that is, in Effect denied Him to be the *Son of the living GOD*, on the Faith whereof the Church is built. And these were of two Sorts.

1. SUCH as plainly and openly denied Him to have any *Pre-existence* unto his Conception and Birth of the Holy Virgin. Such were the *Ebionites, Samosatarians, and Photinians*: For they all affirmed Him to be a *mere Man*. This Attempt lay directly against the *everlasting Rock*, and would have substituted *Sand* in the Room of it. For no better is the best of Human Nature to make a Foundation for the Church, if not united unto the Divine. Many in those Days followed those pernicious Ways;

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Ways; yet the Foundation of GOD stood sure, nor was the Church moved from it. But yet after a Revolution of so many Ages, is the same Endeavour again engaged in. The old Enemy taking Advantage of that Prevalency of *Atheism* and *Prophaneness* among those that are called *Christians*, doth again employ the same Engine to overthrow the Faith of the Church, and that with more Subtilty than formerly in the *Socinians*. For their Faith, or rather Unbelief, concerning the Person of *Christ*, is the same with those before mentioned.

2. THERE were such as opposed his *divine Nature* under Pretence of declaring it another Way, than the Church did. So was it with the *Arians*, in whom the *Gates of Hell* seemed once to be near a Prevalency. For almost the whole professing World was once surprized into that Heresy. In Words they acknowledged his divine Person; but added as a Limitation of that Acknowledgment, that the divine Nature which He had, was *originally created of GOD*, and produced out of nothing, with a double Blasphemy, denying Him to be the true GOD, and making a God of a meer Creature. But in all these Attempts the Opposition of the *Gates of Hell* unto the Church, respected Faith in the Person of *Christ* as Son of the living GOD.

○ SECONDLY, By some his *human Nature* was opposed, for no Stone did *Satan* leave unturned in the Pursuit of his great Design. And that which in all these Things he aimed at, was the Substitution of a false *Christ*, in the room of Him who in one Person was both the Son of Man, and the Son of the living GOD. And herein he infected the Minds of Men with endless Imaginations. Some denied Him to have any real human Nature, but to have been a *Phantasm*, an Appearance, acted by divine Power; some

some that He was made of *heavenly Flesh*, brought from above, and which as some also affirmed, was a *Parcel of the divine Nature*. Some affirmed that this Body was not animated as ours are, by a *rational Soul*, but was immediately acted by the Power of the divine Being, in the room of a Soul. Some that his Body was of an *ethereal Nature*, and was at length turned into the Sun; with many such diabolical Delusions. And there yet want not Attempts in these Days, of various Sorts, to destroy the Verity of his human Nature. The Design of *Satan* in all these pernicious Imaginations is to break the Alliance between *Christ* in his human Nature and the Church, whereon the Salvation of it doth absolutely depend.

THIRDLY, he raised a vehement Opposition against the Union of these two Natures in one Person. This he did in the *Nestorian Heresy*, which greatly, and for a long Time pestered the Church. The Authors and Promoters of this Opinion, granted the *LORD Christ* to have a divine Nature, to be the Son of the living GOD. They also acknowledged the Truth of his human Nature, that he was truly a Man even as we are. But the *personal Union* between these two Natures they denied. An Union they said there was between them, but such as consisted only in *Love, Power, and Care*. GOD did, as they imagined, eminently and powerfully manifest Himself in the Man *Christ Jesus*. But that the Son of GOD assumed our Nature; this they would not acknowledge. And this pernicious Imagination, though it seems to make Concessions of Truth, doth no less effectually avert the Foundation of the Church than the former. For if the divine and human Nature of *Christ* do not constitute one *individual Person*, all that He did for us was only as a Man, which would have been altogether insufficient for



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for the Salvation of the Church, nor had GOD *re-deemed it with his own Blood*. This seems to be the Opinion of some amongst us at this Day, about the Person of *Christ*. They acknowledge the Being of the eternal Word the Son of GOD. And they allow in the like Manner the Verity of his human Nature, or own the Man *Christ Jesus*: Only they say, that the eternal Word was in Him and with Him in the same Kind, as it is with other Believers; but in a supreme Degree of Manifestation and Power. But though in these Things there is a great Endeavour to put a new Colour on old Imaginations, the Design of *Satan* is one and the same in them all, namely, to oppose the Building of the Church upon its proper sole Foundation. And these Things shall be afterwards expressly spoken unto.

I INTEND no more in these Instances, but briefly to demonstrate, that the principal Opposition of the *Gates of Hell* unto the Church lay always to the Building of it by Faith on the Person of *Christ*.

IT were easy also to demonstrate that *Mahometism*, which hath been so sore a Stroke unto the *Christian* Profession, is nothing but a Combination of Force and Fraud, in Opposition to the Person of *Christ*.

IT is true that *Satan* after all this, by another Way, attempted the Doctrine of the Offices and Grace of *Christ*, with the Worship of GOD in Him. And this He hath carried so far, as that it issued in a fatal *Antichristian Apostacy*; which is not of my present Consideration.

BUT we may proceed to what is of our own immediate Concernment. And the same Work with that before described is still carried on. The Person  
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of *Christ*, the Faith of the Church concerning it, the Relation of the Church unto it, the Building of the Church on it, the Life and Preservation of the Church thereby, are Things that the *Gates of Hell* are engaged in an Opposition unto. For,

1. IT is known with what Subtilty and Urgency his divine Nature and Person are opposed by the *Socinians*. What an Accession is made daily unto their Incredulity! What Inclination Multitudes manifest towards their pernicious Ways, are also evident unto all who have any Concernment in or for Religion.

2. MANY who deny not his *divine Person*, yet seem to grow weary of any Concernment therein. A *natural Religion*, or none at all, pleaseth them better than Faith in GOD by *Jesus Christ*. That any Thing more is necessary in Religion, but what *natural Light* will discover and conduct us in, with the *moral Duties* of Righteousness, there are too many that will not acknowledge. What is beyond the Line of Nature and Reason is rejected as unintelligible Mysteries or Follies. The Person and Grace of *Christ* are supposed to breed all the Disturbance in Religion. Without them the common Notions of the divine Being and Goodness, will guide Men sufficiently unto eternal Blessedness.

3. THERE are some who have so ordered the Frame of Religion, that it is very uncertain, whether they leave any Place for the Person of *Christ* in it or no. For besides their Denial of the *hypostatical Union* of his Nature, they ascribe all that unto a *Light within them*, which GOD will effect only by *Christ* as a Mediator. What are the internal Actings of their Minds, as to Faith and Trust in  
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Him, I know not ; but from their outward Profession He seems to be almost excluded.

4. **THERE** are not a few who pretend high unto Religion and Devotion, who declare no erroneous Conceptions about the *Person of Christ*, who yet manifest themselves not to have that Regard unto Him, which the Gospel prescribes and requires. Hence have we so many Discourses published about practical Holiness and Duties of Obedience, written with great Elegancy of Stile, and Seriousness in Argument, in which we can meet with little or nothing wherein *Jesus Christ*, his Office or his Grace are concerned. Yea it is odds, but we shall meet with some *Reflections* on those who judge them to be the Life and Center of our Religion. The Things of *Christ* beyond the Example of his Conversation on the Earth, are of no Use with such Persons unto the Promotion of Piety and Gospel-Obedience.

**THAT** by these, and the like Means, *Satan* doth yet attempt the Ruin of the Church as to its Building on an everlasting Rock, falls under the Observation of all who are concerned in its Welfare. And whatever others may apprehend concerning this State of Things, how any that love the **LORD Jesus** in Sincerity, especially such as are called to declare and represent Him unto Men in the *Office of the Ministry*, can acquit themselves without giving their Testimony against, and endeavouring to stop what lies in them, the Progress of this prevailing Declension from the only Foundation of the Church, I know not.

SOME few Things concerning the Person of *Christ* with respect unto the Confession of *Peter*, will be comprised in the ensuing Discourse. And some Things I must premise in general. As,

I. **THE**



1. THE Instances which I shall give concerning the *Use and Consideration of the Person of Christ in Christian Religion*, are but *few*, and those perhaps not the most *signal* which the greater spiritual Wisdom of others might propose. And indeed who shall declare what are the chief Instances of this incomprehensible Effect of divine Wisdom? *What is his Name, and what is his Son's Name if thou canst tell?* Prov. xxx. 4. See *Isa.* ix. 6. It is enough for us to stand in an holy Admiration at the Shore of this unsearchable Ocean, and to gather up some Parcels of that divine Treasure, wherewith the Scripture of Truth is enriched.

2. I MAKE no Pretence of searching into the Bottom of any Part of this great *Mystery of Godliness*, GOD *manifest in the Flesh*. They are altogether unsearchable unto the Line of the most enlightened Minds in this Life. What we shall farther comprehend of them in the other World, GOD only knows. We cannot in these Things by our utmost Search, *find out the Almighty unto Perfection*. The *Prophets* could not do so of old, nor can the *Angels* themselves at present, who *desire to look into these Things*, 1 Pet. i. 10, 11, 12. Only I shall endeavour to represent unto the Faith of them that believe, somewhat of what the Scripture doth plainly reveal, evidencing in what Sense the *Person of Christ is the sole Foundation of the Church*.

3. I SHALL not herein respect them immediately by whom the divine Person of *Christ* is denied. But it is *their Conviction* which I shall respect herein, who under an outward Confession of the Truth, do either notionally or practically, either ignorantly or designedly, endeavour to weaken the Faith of the Church in its Adherence unto this Foundation. Howbeit neither the one Sort nor the other have

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any Place in my Thoughts in Comparison of the Edification of others, who love the LORD *Jesus Christ* in Sincerity.



### C H A P. III.

*The Person of CHRIST the most ineffable Effect of divine Wisdom and Goodness. Thence the next Cause of all true Religion. In what Sense it is so.*

**T**HE Person of Christ is the most glorious and ineffable Effect of divine Wisdom, Grace, and Power, and therefore is the next Foundation of all acceptable Religion. The divine Being itself is the first Foundation and Object of all Religion. It all depends on taking God to be our God, which is the first of his Commands. For Religion and the Worship performed in it, is nothing but the due Respect of rational Creatures, unto the divine Nature, and its infinite Excellencies. It is the glorifying of God as God, the Way of expressing that Respect, being regulated by the Revelation of his Will. Yet the divine Essence is not in itself the next and immediate Cause of religious Worship. But it is the Manifestation of this Being and its Excellencies wherewith the Mind of rational Creatures is immediately affected, and whereby it is obliged to give that Worship which is due unto that Being, and necessary from our Relation thereunto. Upon this Manifestation all Creatures capable by an intelligent Nature

Nature of a Sense thereof, are indispensibly obliged to give all Honour and Glory to God.

THE Way alone whereby this Manifestation may be made, is by *outward Acts and Effects*. For in itself the divine Nature is hid from all living, and dwelleth in that Light whereunto no Creature can approach. This therefore GOD first made by the Creation of all Things out of Nothing. The Creation of Man himself, with the Principles of a rational Nature, a Conscience attesting his Subordination unto GOD, and of all other Things declaring the Glory of his Wisdom, Goodness, and Power, was the immediate Ground of all *natural Religion*, and yet continues so to be. And the Glory of it answers the Means and Ways of the Manifestation of the divine Being, Existence, Excellencies and Properties. And where this Manifestation is despised or neglected, there GOD Himself is so; as the Apostle discourseth at large, *Rom. i. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.*

BUT of all the Effects of the divine Excellencies, the Constitution of the Person of *Christ* as the Foundation of the new Creation, as the *Mystery of Godliness*, was the most ineffable and glorious. I speak not of his divine Person absolutely: But as *incarnate*, as he assumed our Nature into personal Subsistence with himself. His Conception in the Womb of the Virgin, was a miraculous Operation of the divine Power. But the Prevention of that Nature from any Subsistence of its own, by its Assumption into personal Union with the Son of GOD, in the first Instance of its Conception, is that which is above all Miracles. A Mystery it is, so far above the Order of all creating or providential Operations, that it wholly transcends the Sphere of them that are most miraculous. Herein did GOD glorify all  
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the Properties of the divine Nature, acting in a Way of infinite Wisdom, Grace and Condescension. The Depths of the Mystery hereof, are open only unto Him whose Understanding is Infinite. All other Things were produced by an outward Emanation of Power from GOD: *He said, Let there be Light, and there was Light.* But this Assumption of our Nature into *hypostatical Union* with the Son of GOD, this Constitution of one and the same Person in two Natures so infinitely distinct, whereby the *Eternal* was made *in Time*, the *Infinite* became *Finite*, the *Immortal*, *Mortal*, yet continuing *Eternal*, *Infinite*, *Immortal*, is that singular Expression of divine Wisdom, Goodness and Power, wherein GOD will be admired and glorified unto all Eternity. Herein was that Change introduced into the whole first Creation, whereby the blessed Angels were exalted, *Satan* and his Works ruined, Mankind recovered from a dismal Apostacy, all Things made new, all Things in Heaven and Earth reconciled and gathered into one Head, and a Revenue of eternal Glory raised unto GOD, incomparably above what the first Constitution of all Things in the Order of Nature could yield unto Him.

IN the Expression of this Mystery the Scripture doth sometimes draw the *Vail* over it, as that which we cannot look into. So in his Conception of the Virgin, with Respect unto this Union which accompanied it, it was told her, that *the Power of the Highest should overshadow her*, Luke i. 35. A Work it was of the Power of the most High, but hid from the Eyes of Men in the Nature of it; and therefore *that holy Thing* which had no Subsistence of its own, which should be Born of her, should be called *the Son of GOD*, becoming one Person with Him. Sometimes it expresseth the Greatness of the Mystery,

tery, and leaves it as an Object of our Admiration, 1 Tim. iii. 16. *Without Controversy great is the Mystery of Godliness. GOD was manifested in the Flesh.* A Mystery it is, and that of those Dimensions as no Creature can comprehend. Sometimes it putteth Things together, as that the Distance of the two Natures, shall illustrate the Glory of the one Person, John i. 14. *The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us.* But what Word was this? *That which was in the Beginning, which was with GOD, which was GOD, by whom all Things were made, and without whom was not any Thing made that was made.* This Word was made *Flesh*; not by any Change of his own Nature; not by a Transubstantiation of the divine Nature into the Human; not by ceasing to be what He was, but by becoming what He was not, in taking our Nature to be his own, whereby He *dwelt among us.* This glorious Word which is GOD, and described by his Eternity and Omnipotency in Works of Creation and Providence, *was made Flesh*, which expresseth the lowest Condition of human Nature; *without Controversy* great is this Mystery of Godliness. And in that State wherein He visibly appeared as made *Flesh*, those who had Eyes given them from Above, saw his Glory, *the Glory as of the only Begotten of the Father.* The eternal Word being made *Flesh*, and manifested therein, they saw his Glory, the Glory of the only Begotten of the Father. What Heart can conceive, what Tongue can express the least Part of the Glory of his divine Wisdom and Grace? So also is it proposed unto us, Isa. ix. 6. *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be on his Shoulders; and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty GOD, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.* He is called in the first Place *Wonderful*, and that deservedly, Prov. xxx. 4. That the mighty GOD should

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should be a *Child born*, and the everlasting Father a *Son born unto us*, may well entitle Him unto the Name of *Wonderful*.

THE Glory of the same Mystery is elsewhere testified unto. *Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.* GOD hath spoken unto us by his Son, by whom also He made the Worlds; who being the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person, upholding all Things by the Word of his Power, by Himself purged our Sins. That He purged our Sins by his Death, and the Oblation of Himself therein unto GOD, is acknowledged. That this should be done by Him, by whom the Worlds were made, who is the essential Brightness of the divine Glory, and the express Image of the Person of the Father therein, who upholds, rules, sustains all Things by the Word of his Power, whereby GOD purchased his Church with his own Blood, *Acts xx. 28.* is that wherein He will be admired unto Eternity. See *Phil. ii. 2,—6, 7, 8, 9.*

THIS is the Glory of *Christian Religion*, the Foundation that bears the whole Superstructure. This is its Life and Soul, that wherein it differs from, and inconceivably excels whatever was in true Religion before, or whatever any false Religion pretended unto. Religion in its *first Institution*, in the State of pure incorrupted Nature, was Orderly, Beautiful and Glorious. Man being made in the Image of GOD, was fit and able to glorify Him as GOD. But whereas whatever Perfection GOD had communicated unto our Nature, He had not united it unto Himself in a personal Union, the Fabrick of it quickly fell unto the Ground. Want of this Foundation made it obnoxious unto Ruin. GOD manifested herein, that no gracious Relation between Him and our Nature could be stable and permanent, unless our Nature was assumed into personal



*sonal Union* with Himself. This is the only Rock and assured Foundation of the Relation of the Church unto GOD, which now can never utterly fail.

THERE was true Religion in the World *after the Fall*, both before and after giving of the Law; a Religion built upon divine Revelation. And as for the outward Glory of it, the Administration that it was brought into under the Tabernacle and Temple, was beyond what is represented in the Institutions of the Gospel. Yet is *Christian Religion*, our *evangelical* Profession, and the State of the Church thereon, *far more Glorious*, Beautiful and Perfect, than that State of Religion could attain. And as this is evident from hence, because GOD in his Wisdom, Grace and Love to the Church, hath removed *that* State, and introduced *this* in the room thereof; so the Apostle proves it in all considerable Instances, in his *Epistle to the Hebrews*, written to that Purpose. There were two Things before in Religion: The *Promise* which was the Life of it, and the *Institutions* of Worship under the Law, which were the outward Glory and Beauty of it. And both these were nothing, or had nothing in them, but only what they represented of *Christ*, GOD *manifesteth in the Flesh*. The Promise was concerning Him; and the Institutions of Worship did only represent Him. So the Apostle declares it, *Col. ii. 17*. Wherefore as all the Religion that was in the World after the Fall was built on the Promise of this Work of GOD in due Time to be accomplished, so it is the actual Performance of it, which is the Foundation of *Christian Religion*, and which gives it the Pre-eminence above all that went before it.

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THE *Faith* of this Mystery ennobles the Mind wherein it is, transforming it into the Image of GOD. Herein consists the Excellency of Faith above all other Powers and Acts of the Soul, that it receives, assents unto, and rests in Things in their own Nature absolutely Incomprehensible. It is *ἡ πίστις ἡ ἀβλεπόμενος*, Heb. xi. 1. *The Evidence of Things not seen*; that which makes evident as by Demonstration, those Things which are no Way the Object of Sense, and which Reason cannot comprehend. The more Sublime and Glorious, the more inaccessible unto Sense and Reason are the Things which we believe, the more are we chang'd into the Image of GOD, in the Exercise of Faith upon them. Hence we find this most glorious Effect of Faith, the Transformation of the Mind into the Likeness of GOD, no less Real, Evident and Eminent in many, whose rational Abilities are weak in the Eye of that Wisdom which is of this World, than in those of the highest natural Sagacity. For GOD *bath chosen the Poor of this World Rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Kingdom*, Jam. ii. 5. However they may be Poor, and as another Apostle speaketh *foolish, weak, base and despised*, 1 Cor. i. 27, 28. yet that Faith which enables them to embrace divine Mysteries, renders them *Rich in the Sight of GOD*, in that it makes them like unto Him.

BUT where this Faith is, the Greatness of the Mysteries which it embraceth, heightens its Efficacy in all blessed Effects upon the Soul. Such is this *Constitution of the Person of Christ*, wherein all the Glory of all the holy Perfections of the divine Nature are manifested. So speaks the Apostle, 2 Cor. iii. 18. *Beholding as in a Glass the Glory of the LORD, we are changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory*. This Glory which we behold is the  
Glory

Glory of the Face of GOD in *Jesus Christ*, chap. iv. 6. or the glorious Representation which is made of Him in the Person of *Christ*. The Glass wherein this Glory is represented unto us, proposed unto our View and Contemplation, is the Gospel. And those who View it stedfast, are thereby *changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory*; or are more and more renewed and transformed into the Likeness of GOD so represented unto them.

THAT which shall at last perfectly effect our utmost Conformity to GOD, and therein our eternal Blessedness, is *Vision*, or Sight. *We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is*, 1 *John* iii. 2. Here Faith begins what Sight shall perfect hereafter. But yet *we walk by Faith, and not by Sight*, 2 *Cor.* v. 7. And although the Life of Faith and Vision differ in Degrees, yet have they both the same Object, and the same Operations. The Object of *Vision* is the whole Mystery of the divine Existence and Will; and its Operation, is a perfect Conformity to GOD, wherein our Blessedness shall consist. Faith hath the same Object, and the same Operations in its Degree and Measure. The great and incomprehensible Mysteries of the divine Being, of the Will and Wisdom of GOD, are its proper Objects, and its Operation with Respect unto us, is *Conformity* unto Him. And this it doth in a peculiar Manner in the Contemplation of the Glory of GOD in the Face of *Jesus Christ*; and herein we have our nearest Approaches unto the Life of Vision, and the Effects of it. For therein *beholding the Glory of GOD in the Face of Jesus Christ, we are changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory*; which perfectly to consummate is the Effect of Sight in Glory. The Exercise of Faith herein doth more raise and perfect the Mind,  
more



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more dispose it unto holy, heavenly Affections, than any other Duty whatever.

To be *nigh unto GOD*, and to be *like unto Him*, are the same. To be always with Him, and perfectly like Him, according to the Capacity of our Nature, is to be eternally Blessed. To live by Faith in the Contemplation of the Glory of GOD in *Christ*, is that Initiation into both, whereof we are capable in this World. The Endeavours of some to contemplate and report the Glory of GOD in Nature, in the Works of Creation and Providence, in the Things of the greater and lesser World, deserve their just Commendation; and it is that which the Scripture in sundry Places calls us unto: But for any there to abide, there to bound their Designs, when they have a much more glorious Object for their Meditations, namely, *the Glory of GOD in Christ*, is both to despise the Wisdom of GOD in that Revelation of Himself, and to come short of that transforming Efficacy of Faith, whereby we are made like unto GOD. For hereunto alone doth it belong, and not to any Knowledge of the most secret Recesses of Nature.

MOREOVER, this Constitution of the Person of *Christ* being the most admirable Effect of divine Wisdom, Grace and Power, is that alone which can bear *the Weight of the whole Superstructure* of the Mystery of Godliness; that wherein alone Faith can find Rest and Peace. *Other Foundation can no Man lay save that is laid, which is Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. iii. 11.* Rest and Peace with GOD, is that which we seek after; *What shall we do to be saved?* In this Enquiry the Acts of the *mediatory Office of Christ* are in the Gospel first presented unto us, especially his Oblation and Intercession: Through them is He able to *save unto the utmost* those that  
come

come to GOD by Him. His Blood alone could purge our Consciences from dead Works, who did offer Himself unto GOD, through the eternal Spirit, *Heb. ix. 14.* And when the Apostle, for our Relief against the Guilt of Sin calleth us unto the Consideration of Intercession and Propitiation, He mindeth us peculiarly of his *Person* by whom they are formed, *1 John ii. 1, 2.* *If any Man Sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and He is the Propitiation for our Sins.* And we may briefly consider the Order of these Things.

1. WE suppose in this Case Conscience to be awakened unto a Sense of Sin and *Apostacy* from GOD. These Things are now generally looked on as of no great Concernment: But when GOD *fixeth* an Apprehension of his Displeasure for them on the Soul, if it be before it be too late, it will cause Men to look out for *Relief*.

2. THIS *Relief* is proposed in the Gospel. And it is the Death and Mediation of *Christ* alone. By them Peace with GOD must be obtained, or it will cease for ever. But,

3. WHEN any Person comes *practically* to know how great a Thing it is for an *apostate* Sinner, to obtain the Remission of Sins, and an Inheritance among them that are sanctified, endless *Objections* through the Power of Unbelief will arise unto his Disquietment. Wherefore,

4. THAT which is principally suited to give him Rest, Peace and Satisfaction, and without which nothing else can so do, is the due Consideration of this *infinite Effect* of *divine Wisdom* and Goodness in the Constitution of the Person of *Christ*.

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This at first View will reduce the Mind unto that Conclusion, *If thou canst believe, all Things are possible.* For what End cannot be effected hereby? What End cannot be accomplished that was designed in it? Is any Thing too hard for GOD? Did GOD ever do any Thing like this, or make Use of any such Means for any other End whatever? Against this no Objection can arise. On this Consideration of Him, Faith apprehends *Christ* to be as He is indeed, the Power of GOD, and the Wisdom of GOD unto the Salvation of them that believe, and therein doth it find Rest with Peace.



### CHAP. IV.

*The Person of CHRIST the Foundation of all the Counsels of GOD.*

**S**ECONDLY, The Person of *Christ* is the Foundation of all the Counsels of GOD, as to his own eternal Glory in the Vocation, Sanctification, and Salvation of the Church. That which I intend is what the Apostle expresseth, *Ephes. i. 9, 10. Having made known the Mystery of his Will, according to his good Pleasure which He proposed in Himself, that in the Dispensation of the Fulness of Time He might gather together in one, all Things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on Earth, even in Him.* The Mysteries of the Will of GOD, according to his good Pleasure, which He purposed in Himself, are his Counsels concerning his own eternal Glory in the Sanctification and Salvation of the Church here below, to be united unto that above. The absolute Original hereof was  
in



in his own good Pleasure. But it was all to be effected in *Christ*.

THUS it is said of Him with Respect to his future Incarnation and Work of Mediation, *that the LORD possessed Him in the Beginning of his Ways, before his Works of old, that He was set up from Everlasting, from the Beginning or ever the Earth was,* Prov. viii. 22, 23. The eternal personal Existence of the Son of GOD, is supposed in these Expressions. Without it none of these Things could be affirmed of Him. But there is a Regard in them, both unto his future Incarnation, and the Accomplishment of the *Counsels of GOD* thereby. With Respect thereto, *GOD possessed Him in the Beginning of his Ways, and set Him up from Everlasting.* GOD possessed Him eternally as his essential Wisdom, as He was always and is always in the Bosom of the Father, in the mutual ineffable Love of the Father and Son, in the eternal Bond of the Spirit. But He signally *possessed Him in the Beginning of his Ways,* as his Wisdom acting in the Production of all his Ways and Works. The *Beginning of GOD's Ways before his Works,* are his Counsels concerning them, even as our Counsels are the Beginning of our Ways with Respect unto future Works. And He *set Him up from Everlasting,* as the Foundation of all the Counsels of his Will, in and by whom they were to be executed and accomplished.

So it is expressed, ver. 30, 31. *I was by Him as one brought up with Him, I was daily his Delight, rejoicing before Him, rejoicing in the habitable Parts of the Earth, and my Delights were with the Sons of Men.* And it is added, that thus it was before the *Foundation of the World was laid, or the chiefest Part of the Dust of the Earth was made,* that is, Man was created. Not only was the Delight of

the Father in Him, but his Delight was in the habitable Parts of the Earth, and among the Sons of Men, before the Creation of the World. Wherefore the eternal Prospect of the Work He had to do for the Children of Men is intended herein. In and with Him GOD laid the Foundation of all his Counsels concerning his Love towards the Children of Men: And two Things may be observed herein.

1. THAT the Person of the Son *was set up*, or exalted herein. *I was set up, saith He, from Everlasting.* This cannot be spoken absolutely of the Person of the Son Himself; the divine Nature being not capable of being so *set up*. But there was a peculiar Glory and Honour, belonging unto the Person of the Son, as *designed* by the Father, unto the Execution of all the Counsels of his Will. Hence was that Prayer of his upon the Accomplishment of them; *John xvii. 5. And now, O Father, glorify Me with thine Ownself, with the Glory which I had with Thee before the World was.* To suppose that the LORD *Christ* prayeth in these Words for such a real Communication of the Properties of the divine Nature unto the Human, as should render it *Immense, Omniscient*; is to think that He prayed for the Destruction, and not the Exaltation of it. For on that Supposition it must necessarily lose all its own essential Properties, and consequently its Being. Nor doth He seem to pray only for the *Manifestation* of his divine Nature, which was eclipsed in his Exinanition or Appearance in the Form of a Servant. There was no Need to express this, by the *Glory which He had with the Father before the World was*; for He had it not in any especial Manner before the World was; but equally from Eternity and in every Moment of Time. Wherefore He had a peculiar Glory of his own with the Father before

before the World was. And this was no other, but that especial Exaltation which He had when He was *set up* from Everlasting as the Foundation of the Counsels of GOD, for the Salvation of the Church. For the Manifestation hereof He now prays; and that the Glory of his Goodness, Grace, and Love in his peculiar Undertaking of the Execution of the Counsels of GOD, might be made to appear. And this is the principal Design of the Gospel. It is the Declaration as of the Grace of GOD the Father, so of the Love, Grace, Goodness and Compassion of the Son in undertaking the Accomplishment of GOD's Counsels in the Salvation of the Church. And hereby doth He *hold up the Pillars of the Earth*, or support this inferior Creation which otherwise, with the Inhabitants of it, would by Sin have been dissolved. And those by whom his eternal divine Pre-existence, antecedent unto his Incarnation is denied, do what lies in them expressly to despoil Him of all that Glory which He had with the Father before the World was. So we have herein the Whole of our Design. In the *beginning of GOD's Ways before his Works of old*; that is, in his eternal Counsels with Respect unto the Children of Men, or the Sanctification and Salvation of the Church, the LORD possessed, enjoyed the Son as his eternal Wisdom, in and with whom they were laid, in and by whom they were to be accomplished, wherein his Delights were with the Sons of Men.

2. THAT there was an *ineffable Delight* between the Father and the Son in this his *setting up* or Exaltation. *I was*, said He, *daily his Delight, rejoicing always before Him*. It is not absolutely the mutual eternal Delight of the Father and the Son, arising from the Perfection of the same divine Excellencies in each Person that is intended; but Re-



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spect is plainly had unto the *Counsels of God*, concerning the Salvation of Mankind by Him who is his Power and Wisdow unto that End.

IN these Counsels did God *Delight*, or in the Person of *Christ*, as his eternal Wisdom in their Contrivance, and as the Means of their Accomplishment in his future Incarnation. Hence He so testifieth of Him, *Behold my Servant whom I uphold, my Elect in whom my Soul delighteth*, Isa. xlii. 1. as He also proclaimes the *same Delight* in Him from Heaven in the Days of his Flesh, *Matt. iii. 17. chap. xvii. 5.* He was the Delight of God, as He in whom all his Counsels for his own Glory in the Redemption and Salvation of the Church, were laid and Founded. *Isa. xlix. 3. My Servant in whom I will be glorified, that is, by raising the Tribes of Jacob, restoring the Preserved of Israel, in being a Light unto the Gentiles and Salvation of God unto the Ends of the Earth, v. 6.*

God doth *Delight* in the actual Accomplishment of his Works. He made not this World, nor any Thing in it for its own Sake. Much less did He make this Earth to be a Theatre for Men to act their Lusts upon, the Use which it is now put to and Groans under. But He made *all Things for Himself*, Prov. xvi. 4. *He made them for his Pleasure*, Rev. iv. 11. that is, not only by an Act of Sovereignty, but to his own Delight and Satisfaction. And a double Testimony did He give hereunto with Respect unto the Works of Creation. (1.) In the *Approbation* which He gave of the Whole upon its Survey. And God *saw all that He had made, and behold it was good*, Gen. i. 31. There was that Impression of his divine Wisdom, Power and Goodness upon the Whole, as manifested his  
Glory,

Glory, wherein He was well pleased. For immediately thereon, all Creatures capable of the Apprehension of his Glory, *sang forth his Praise*, Job xxxviii. 6, 7. (2.) In that He *rested from his Works*, or in them when they were finished, Gen. ii. 2. It was not a Rest of Weariness from the Labour of his Work, but a Rest of Complacency and Delight in what He had Wrought, that God *entered into*.

BUT the principal Delight of God is in his *eternal Counsels*. For all his Delight in his Works, is but in the Effects of those divine Properties whose primitive and principal Exercise is in the Counsels themselves from whence they proceed. Especially is it so as unto these Counsels of the Father and the Son, as to the Redemption and Salvation of the Church, wherein they delight, and mutually rejoice in each other on their Account. They are all eternal Acts of God's infinite Wisdom, Goodness and Love, a Delight and Complacency wherein is no small Part of the divine Blessedness. These Things are absolutely unconceivable unto us, and ineffable by us; we cannot find the Almighty out unto Perfection. However certain it is from the Notions we have of the divine Being and Excellencies, and from the Revelation He hath made of Himself, that there is an infinite Delight in God, in the eternal Actings of his Wisdom, Goodness and Love, wherein according to our weak and dark Apprehensions of Things, we may safely place no small Portion of divine Blessedness.

BUT we must return to manifest in particular how all these *Counsels of God* were laid in the *Person of Christ*, to which End the Things ensuing may be distinctly considered.

1. GOD made all Things in the Beginning *exceeding Good*. The whole of his Work was disposed into a perfect *Harmony*, Beauty, and Order, suited unto that Manifestation of his own Glory which He designed therein. And as all Things had their own individual Existence, and Operations suited unto their Being, and capable of an End, a Rest, or a Blessedness, congruous unto their Natures and Operations; so in the various Respects which they had each to other, they all tended unto that ultimate End, his eternal Glory. For as in their *Beings* and Existence they were Effects of *infinite Power*, so were their mutual Respects and Ends disposed in *infinite Wisdom*. Thereon were the eternal Power and Wisdom of GOD glorified in them; the one in their Production, the other in their Disposal into their Order and Harmony. *Man* was a Creature that GOD made, that by Him he might receive the Glory that he aimed at in and by the whole inanimate Creation, both that below which was for his Use, and that above which was for his *Contemplation*. This was the End of our Nature in its original Constitution. Thereunto are we again restored in *Christ*.

2. GOD was pleased to *permit the Entrance of Sin*, both in Heaven above and in the Earth beneath, whereby this whole Order and *Harmony* was disturbed. There are yet *Characters* of divine Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, remaining on the Works of Creation, and inseparable from their Beings. But the *primitive Glory* that was to redound unto GOD by them, especially as to all Things here below, was from the *Obedience of Man* unto whom they were put in Subjection. Their good Estate depended on their Subordination to him in a Way of *natural Use*, as his did on GOD in the Way of *moral Obedience*, Gen. i. 26.—28. Psal.



Psal. viii. 6, 7, 8. Man, as was said, is a Creature which GOD made, that by Him he might receive the Glory that he aimed at, in and by the whole inanimate Creation. This was the End of our Nature in its original Constitution. Thereunto are we again restored in *Christ*, Jam. i. 18. But the *Entrance of Sin* cast all this Order into Confusion, and brought the Curse on all Things here below. Hereby were they deprived of that Estate wherein they were declared *exceeding Good*, and cast into that of *Vanity* under the Burden whereof they groan, and will do so to the End, Gen. iii. 17, 18. Rom. viii. 20, 21.

3. GOD had from all Eternity laid in Provisions of Counsels for the *Recovery* of all Things into a better Estate than was lost by Sin. This is the ἀνάψυξις, the ἀποκατάστασις πάντων, the *Revivification*, the *Restitution* of all Things, Acts iii. 19, 21. The ἀνακεφαλαιώσεις, or the *Gathering* all Things in Heaven and Earth into a new Head in *Christ Jesus*, Ephes. i. 10. For although it may be, there is more of Curiosity than of Edification, in a scrupulous Enquiry into the *Method or Order* of GOD's eternal Counsels, and the Disposal of them into a Subserviency one unto another; yet this is necessary from the infinite *Wisdom* of GOD, that He is put unto *no new Counsels* by any Events in the Works of Creation. All Things were disposed by Him, in those Ways and Methods, and that from Eternity which conduce unto, and certainly issue in that *Glory* which is ultimately intended.

4. THERE were therefore *eternal Counsels* of GOD, whereby He disposed all Things into a *new Order*, unto his own Glory, in the Sanctification and Salvation of the Church. And of them two  
Things

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Things may be considered. (1.) Their *Original*.  
(2.) The *Design* of their Accomplishment.

(1.) THEIR first Spring was in the *divine Will and Wisdom* alone. No Reason can be given of these Counsels, but the *Will of GOD* alone. Hence are they called or described by, the *good Pleasure which He purposed in Himself*, Ephes. i. 9. *The Purpose of Him who worketh all Things according to the Counsel of his Will*, ver. 11. *Who hath known the Mind of the LORD, or who hath been his Counsellor, or who hath given first unto Him, and it shall be recompensed to Him again? For of Him, and thro' Him, and to Him are all Things*, Rom. xi. 34, 35, 36. The Incarnation of *Christ*, and his Mediation thereon were not the *procuring Cause* of these *eternal Counsels* of GOD; but the Effects of them as the Scripture constantly declares. But the Design of their *Accomplishment* was laid in the Person of the Son alone. As He was the *essential Wisdom* of GOD, all Things were at first created by Him. But upon a Prospect of the Ruin of all by Sin, GOD would in and by Him, *as He was fore-ordained to be incarnate*, restore all Things. The whole Counsel of GOD unto this End centered in Him alone.

THUS as all Things were originally made and created by Him, as he was the *essential Wisdom* of GOD, so all Things are renewed and recovered by Him, as He is the *provisional Wisdom* of GOD in and by his Incarnation. Therefore are these Things put together and compared unto his Glory, Col. i. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. *He is the Image of the invisible GOD, the First-born of every Creature. For by Him were all Things created that are in Heaven and that are in the Earth, visible and invisible, all Things were created by Him and for Him; and He is before all Things, and by Him all Things consist; and He is the Head* of

of the Body, the Church, the Beginning, the First-born, from the Dead, that in all Things He might have the Pre-eminence. Two Things as the Foundation of what is ascribed unto the LORD Christ in the ensuing Discourse, are asserted, v. 15. (1.) That He is the Image of the invisible GOD; (2.) That He is the First-born of every Creature: Things seeming very distant in themselves, but gloriously united in his Person.

(1.) HE is the Image of the invisible GOD; or as it is elsewhere expressed, He is in the Form of GOD, his essential Form, the Brightness of the Glory, and express Image of the Father's Person. And as He is the essential, the eternal Image of the invisible GOD, his Wisdom and Power, the Efficiency of the first Creation, and its Consistence being created, as ascribed unto Him, v. 16, 17. By Him were all Things created that are in Heaven and in Earth, Visible and Invisible. And because of the great Notions that were then in the World, especially among the Jews, of the Greatness and Glory of the invisible Part of the Creation in Heaven above, He mentions them in particular, under the most glorious Titles that any could ascribe unto them; whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities or Powers. All Things were created by Him and for Him; the same Expression that is used of GOD absolutely, Rom. xi. 36.

(2.) AGAIN it is added, that He is the First-born of every Creature; which principally respects the new Creation, as it is declared v. 18. He is the Head of the Body, the Church, the Beginning; the First-born from the Dead, that in all Things He might have the Pre-eminence. For in Him were all the Counsels of GOD laid, for the Recovery of all Things unto Himself; as He was to be Incarnate.

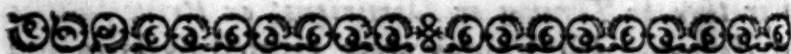
And



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And the Accomplishment of these Counsels of GOD by Him, the Apostle declares at large in the ensuing Verses. And these Things are both joined in this Place. As GOD the Father did nothing in the *first Creation* but by Him as his eternal Wisdom, *John* i. 3. *Heb.* i. 2. *Prov.* viii. So He designed nothing in the *new Creation* or Restoration of all Things, but in Him as He was to be Incarnate. Wherefore in his Person were laid all the *Foundations of the Counsels of GOD*, for the Sanctification and Salvation of the Church. Herein He is glorified, and that in a Way unspeakably exceeding all that Glory which would have accrued unto Him from the first Creation, had all Things abode in their primitive Constitution.

HIS Person therefore is the Foundation of the Church, the great *Mystery of Godliness*, or the Religion we profess; the entire Life and Soul of all spiritual Truth; in that all the *Counsels of the Wisdom, Grace and Goodness of GOD*, for the Redemption, Vocation, Sanctification and Salvation of the Church, were all laid in Him, and by Him were all to be accomplished.



### CHAP. V.

*The PERSON of CHRIST the great Representative of GOD and his Will.*

**W**HAT may be known of GOD, is his Nature and Existence, with the holy Counsels of his Will. A Representation of them unto us, is the Foundation of all Religion, and the Means of  
our

our Conformity unto Him. To *know* GOD, so as thereby to be made *like unto Him*, is the chief End of Man. This is done perfectly only in the *Person of Christ*, all other Means of it being subordinate thereto, and none of them of the same Nature therewith. The End of the *Word* itself is to instruct us in the Knowledge of GOD in *Christ*. That therefore which I should now demonstrate is, that in the *Person and Mediation of Christ which are inseparable*, there is made unto us a blessed Representation of the glorious Properties of the divine Nature, and of the holy Counsels of GOD. The first of these I shall speak unto in this Chapter; the other in that which ensues, wherein we shall manifest how all *divine Truths do Center* in the Person of *Christ*. And the Consideration of sundry Things are necessary to the Explication hereof.

I. GOD in his own *Essence*, is absolutely *Incomprehensible*. His Nature being immense; and all his holy Properties *essentially infinite*, no Creature can perfectly comprehend them, or any of them. He must be *infinite* that can perfectly comprehend that which is *infinite*. Wherefore GOD is perfectly known unto Himself only; but as for us *how little a Portion is heard of Him?* Hence He is called the *invisible* GOD, and said to dwell in Light inaccessible. The *Subsistence* of his Nature in *three distinct Persons*, though it raises and enobles Faith in its Revelation, yet it *amazeth* Reason which would trust to itself in the Contemplation of it; whence Men grow giddy who will own no other Guide, and are carried out of the Way of Truth. *No Man hath seen GOD at any Time; the only Begotten who is in the Bosom of the Father He hath declared Him*, John i. 18. 1 Tim. vi. 16.

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2. THEREFORE we can have no direct *intuitive Notions* of the divine Essence or its Properties. Such *Knowledge is too wonderful for us*. Whatever is pleaded for an *intellectual Vision* of the Essence of GOD in the Light of Glory, yet none pretend unto a Possibility of an immediate *full Comprehension* of it. But in our present State GOD is to us, as He was unto *Moses* under all the external Manifestations of his Glory, *in thick Darknes*, *Exod. xx. 21*. All the rational Conceptions of the Minds of Men, are swallowed up and lost, when they would exercise themselves *directly* on that which is absolutely immense, eternal, infinite.

THIS is declared in the Answer given unto that Request of *Moses*; *I beseech Thee shew me thy Glory*, *Exod. xxxiii. 18*. *Moses* had heard a Voice speaking unto him, but He that spake was *in thick Darknes*, he saw Him not. Glorious Evidences He gave of his *majestatical Presence*, but no Appearance was made of his Essence or Person. Hereon *Moses* desireth for the full Satisfaction of his Soul (as the nearer any one is unto GOD, the more earnest will be his Desire after the full Fruition of Him) that he might have a *Sight of his Glory*, not of that created Glory in the Tokens of his Presence and Power which he had beheld, but of the *increated Glory of his Essence* and Being. Through a Transport of Love to GOD, he would have been in Heaven whilst he was on the Earth; yea desired more than Heaven itself will afford, if he would have seen the *Essence of GOD* with his corporeal Eyes. In Answer hereto GOD tells him, *that he cannot see his Face and live*; none can have either bodily Sight or direct Intuition of the divine Being. But this I will do, saith GOD, *I will make my Glory pass before thee, and thou shalt see my back Parts*, *Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, &c.* This is all that  
GOD



GOD would grant, namely, such *external Representations* of Himself in the Proclamation of his Name, and created Appearances of his Glory, as we have of a Man whose *back Parts only* we behold as he passeth by us. But as to the *Being of GOD*, and his Subsistence in the *Trinity of Persons*, we have no direct Intuition into them, much less Comprehension of them.

3. IT is evident therefore that our Conceptions of GOD, and of the glorious Properties of his Nature, are both generated in us, and regulated by Reflections of his Glory on other Things, and Representations of his divine Excellencies in the Effects of them. So the invisible Things of GOD, *even his eternal Power and Godhead, are clearly seen, being manifested and understood by the Things that are made*, Rom. i. 20. Yet must it be granted, that no meer Creature, not the Angels above, are able to receive upon them, such *Characters* of the divine Excellencies, as to be a compleat satisfactory Representation of the *Being and Properties* of GOD, unto us. They are all *finite* and limited, and so cannot properly represent that which is *infinite* and immense. And this is the true Reason why all Worship or *religious* Adoration of them is Idolatry. Yet are there such Effects of GOD's Glory in them, such Impressions of divine Excellencies upon them, as we cannot comprehend nor search out unto Perfection. How little do we conceive of the Nature, Glory and Power of *Angels*? So remote are we from an immediate Comprehension of the uncreated Glory of GOD, that we cannot fully apprehend, the Reflection of it on Creatures in themselves finite and limited. Hence they thought of old, when they had *seen an Angel*, that so much of the divine Perfections had been manifested unto them that thereon they *must die*, Judg. xiii. 21, 22.

Howbeit they come infinitely short of making any compleat Representation of GOD, nor is it otherwise with any Creature whatever.

4. MANKIND seemed to have always had a common Apprehension, that there was need of a nearer and more full Representation of GOD unto them, than was made in any of the Works of Creation or Providence. The Heavens indeed declared his Glory, and the Firmament always shewed his Handy-work. The invisible Things of his eternal Power and Godhead, were continually made known by the Things that are made. But Men generally miscarried in the Contemplation of them, as the Apostle declares, Rom. i. For still they were influenced by a common Presumption that there must be a nearer and more evident Manifestation of GOD; that made by the Works of Creation and Providence, being not sufficient to guide them unto Him. But in the Pursuit hereof, they utterly ruined themselves. They would do what GOD had not done. By common Consent they framed Representations of GOD unto themselves; and were so besotted therein, that they utterly lost the Benefit which they might have received by the Manifestation of Him in the Works of the Creation, and took up with most foolish Imaginations. For whereas they might have learned from thence, the Being of GOD, his infinite Wisdom, Power and Goodness, namely, in the Impressions and Characters of them on the Things that were made; in their own Representations of Him, they changed the Glory of the invisible GOD into an Image made like unto corruptible Man, and to Birds and four-footed Beasts, and creeping Things, Rom. i. 23. Wherefore this common Presumption that there was no Way to attain a due Sense of the divine Being, but by some Representation of it, though true in itself, yet by the Craft of Satan, became

became the Occasion of all *Idolatry*. Hence were all those *Appearances* of their Gods, which *Satan* deluded the *Gentiles* by; and hence were all the Ways which they devised to bring GOD into human Nature, or the Likeness of it. Wherefore in all the Revelations that ever GOD made of Himself, his Mind and Will, He always laid this Practice of *making Representations of Him*, under the most severe Prohibition.

WHEREFORE it is granted that GOD hath placed *many Characters* of his divine Excellencies upon his Works of Creation and Providence; but none of these Things ever did or could give *such a Representation* of Him, as wherein the souls of Men might fully acquiesce, or obtain such Conceptions of Him as might enable them to worship Him in a due Manner. Wherefore,

5. A MEER *external doctrinal Revelation* of the divine Nature and Properties, without any real Representation of them, was not sufficient to the End of GOD in the Manifestation of Himself. This is done in the Scripture: But the whole Scripture proceeds on this Supposition, that there is a *real Representation* of the divine Nature unto us, which it declares and describes. And as there was such a Notion on the Minds of all Men, that some Representation of GOD, wherein He might be near unto them, was necessary, which arose from the Consideration of the infinite Distance between the divine Nature and their own; so as to the Event GOD Himself hath declared that in his *own Way* such a Representation was needful to that End of the Manifestation of Himself, which He designed. For,



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6. ALL this is done in the *Person of Christ*. He is the compleat Image and perfect Representation of the divine Being and Excellencies. I do not speak of it absolutely, but as GOD proposeth Himself as the *Object of our Faith*, Trust and Obedience. It is GOD, as *the Father*, who is so peculiarly represented in Him and by Him; as He says; *He that hath seen the Son, hath seen the Father also*, John xiv. 9.

UNTO such a *Representation* two Things are required. (1.) That all the Properties of the divine Nature, the Knowledge whereof is necessary unto our present Obedience and future Blessedness, be expressed in it, and manifested unto us. (2.) That there be therein the *nearest Approach* of the divine Nature made unto us whereof it is capable, and which we can receive. And both these are found in the *Person of Christ*.

IN the Person of *Christ* we consider both the *Constitution* of it in the *Union of his Natures*, and the Respect of it unto his *Work of Mediation*, which was the End of that Constitution. And,

(1.) THEREIN is there a blessed *Representation* made unto us of all the holy Properties of GOD; of his Wisdom, his Power, his Goodness, Grace and Love, his Righteousness, Truth and Holiness, his Mercy and Patience. As this is affirmed concerning them all in general, or the Glory of GOD in them, which is seen and known only in the *Face of Christ*; so it were easy to manifest the same concerning every one of them in particular.

(2.) THERE is therein the most *incomprehensible Approach of the divine Nature made unto ours*; such as all the Imaginations of Men did ever infinitely fall

fall short of. In the *Assumption of our Nature into personal Union* with Himself, with the Union which Believers obtain with Him thereon, being *one in the Father and the Son, as the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father*, John xvii. 20, 21. There is the nearest Approach of the divine Being unto us, that the Nature of Things is capable of.

COL. i. 15. *He is the Image of the invisible God*. It was necessary that this *invisible God* should be so represented unto us by some *Image* of Him, that we might know Him, and that therein He might be Worshipped according to his own Will. But this must be of his own Contrivance, an Effect of his own infinite Wisdom. Hence as He absolutely rejecteth all *Images and Representations of Him* of Men's devising, and declares that the Honour that any should think would thereby redound unto Him, was not given unto Him, but unto the *Devil*; so that which He hath provided Himself, unto his own holy Ends and Purposes, is every Way approved of Him. For He will have all *Men honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*, and so, as that he who *honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father*, John v. 23, 25.

THIS *Image* therefore is the Person of *Christ*; *He is the Image of the invisible God*. John i. 1. *The Word was with God, and the Word was God*. The Word *was God*, in the Unity of the Divine Essence; and the Word was *with God* in its distinct personal Subsistence. The *Word*, that is, the Person of the Son, as distinct from the Father. And in this Respect He is the *essential Image* of the Father, as He is called in this Place, and that because He partakes of all the same divine Properties with the Father.

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IN his *Incarnation* the Son was made the *representative Image* of GOD unto us, as He was in his Person the *essential Image* of the Father by eternal Generation. The *invisible* GOD whose Nature divine Excellencies our Understandings can make no Approach unto, doth in Him represent, exhibit, or make present unto our Faith and spiritual Sense, both Himself and all the glorious Excellencies of his Nature.

WHEREFORE our LORD *Jesus Christ* the Son of GOD may be consider'd three Ways:

1. MERELY with Respect unto his *divine Nature*. This is one and the same with that of the Father. In this Respect the one is not the Image of the other, for both are the same.

2. WITH Respect unto his *divine Person* as the Son of the Father; the only begotten, eternal Son of GOD. Thus He receives as his *Personality*, so all divine Excellencies from the Father; so He is the *essential Image* of the Father's Person.

3. As He *took our Nature upon Him*, in order to the Work of his Mediation. So is He the only *representative Image* of GOD unto us; in whom alone we see, know and learn all the divine Excellencies, so as to live unto GOD, and be directed to the Enjoyment of Him. All this Himself instructs us in.

He reflects on the *Pharisees* as an Effect of their Blindness and Ignorance, that they *had neither heard the Voice of GOD at any Time, nor seen his Shape*, John v. 37. And in Opposition hereunto He tells his Disciples, that *they had known the Father, and seen Him*, Ch. xiv. 7. And the Reason He gives



gives thereof, is, *because they that knew Him, knew the Father also.* And when one of his Disciples not yet sufficiently instructed in this *Mystery*, replied, *LORD shew us the Father and it sufficeth us,* Ver. 9. His Answer is, *Have I been so long Time with you, and hast thou not known Me? He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father,* Ver. 10.

THREE Things are required to the Justification of this Assertion.

(1.) THAT the Father and He be of the *same Nature*, have the same Essence and Being. For otherwise it would not follow, that he who had *seen Him, had seen the Father also.* This Ground of it He declares in the next Verse, *the Father is in Me, and I am in the Father.* Namely, because they were one in Nature and Essence. For the divine Nature being simply the same in them all, the divine Persons are *in each other* by Virtue of the Oneness of that Nature.

(2.) THAT He be *distinct from Him.* For otherwise there cannot be a *Seeing of the Father* by the *seeing of Him.* He is seen in the Son as represented by Him, as his Image; the Word, the Son of the Father, as He was with GOD. The Unity of Nature, and the Distinction of Persons is the Ground of that Assertion of our Saviour; *He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father also.*

(3.) BUT moreover the LORD *Christ* hath a Respect herein unto Himself in his entire Person as He was *incarnate*, and therein unto the Discharge of his mediatory Work. *Have I been so long Time with you; and hast thou not known Me?* Whilst He was with them, dwelt among them,  
con-

conversed with them, He was the great *Representative* of the Glory of GOD unto them. And notwithstanding this particular Mistake, they did then see *his Glory, the Glory of the only Begotten of the Father*; John i. 14. And in Him was manifested the Glory of the Father. *He is the Image of the invisible GOD.* In Him GOD was, in Him He dwelt, in Him is He *known*, in Him is He worshipped according unto his own Will, in Him is there a *nearer Approach* made unto us, by the divine Nature, than ever could enter into the Heart of Men to conceive. In the Constitution of his Person, of two Natures, so infinitely distinct in themselves, and in the Work it was designed unto, the Wisdom, Power, Goodness, Holiness and Faithfulness of GOD, are manifested unto us. This is the one blessed *Image of the invisible GOD*, wherein we may learn, wherein we may contemplate and adore all his Perfections.

THE same Truth is testified unto, *Heb. i. 3.* GOD spake unto us in the Son, who is the *Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person.* His divine Nature is here included, as that without which He could not have made a perfect Representation of GOD unto us. For the Apostle speaks of Him as *by whom the Worlds were made*, and who *upholdeth all Things by the Word of his Power.* Yet doth he not speak of Him absolutely as He was GOD, but also as He, who in Himself purged our Sins, and is sat down at the Right Hand of the Majesty on High, that is, in his whole Person. Herein He is *ἀπαύρασμα τοῦ δόξης*, the *Effulgency*, the *Resplendency* of Divine Glory. That wherein the Divine Glory shines forth, in an evident Manifestation of itself unto us. And as a farther Explication of the same Mystery, it is added, that He is the *Character or express Image* of the Person of the Father.

Father. Such an Impression of all the glorious Properties of GOD is on Him, as that thereby they become legible unto all that believe.

It may be said, that the *Scripture* itself is sufficient for this End of the *Declaration of GOD unto us*, so that there is no Need of any other Representation of Him; and these Things serve only to turn the Minds of Men from learning the Will of GOD therein, to seek for all in the Person of *Christ*. But the true End of proposing these Things, is to draw Men unto the *diligent Study of the Scripture*, wherein alone they are revealed. And in its proper Use, and unto its proper End it is *perfect* and most sufficient. It is the Word of GOD, howbeit it is not the internal essential Word of GOD, but the external Word spoken by Him. It is not therefore, nor can be the *Image* of GOD, either essential or representative, but is the Revelation and Declaration of it to us, without which we can know nothing of it.

CHRIST is the Image of the invisible GOD, the express Image of the Person of the Father. And the principal End of the whole *Scripture*, especially of the *Gospel*, is to declare Him so to be, and how He is so. What GOD promised by his Prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning his Son *Jesus Christ*, is fully declared in the *Gospel*, *Rom. i. 1, 2, 3, 4.* The *Gospel* is the Declaration of *Christ* as *the Power of GOD, and the Wisdom of GOD*, *1 Cor. i. 23, 24.* Or an evident Representation of GOD in his Person and Mediation unto us, *Gal. iii. 1.* Wherefore three Things are herein to be consider'd.

I. THE real Object of our Faith in this Matter. This is the Person of *Christ*, the Son of GOD



GOD incarnate, the *representative Image* of the Glory of GOD unto us; as in the Testimonies insisted on.

2. THE Means of its Revelation, whereby the Knowledge of it is conveyed unto our Minds. This is the *Gospel*; compared unto a *Glass*, because of the Prospect which we have of the *Image* of GOD therein. But without it, we can behold nothing of this Image of GOD.

3. THE internal Light of the Mind, in the saving Illumination of the holy Spirit enabling us by that Means, and in the Use of it, spiritually to behold and discern *the Glory of GOD in the Face of Jesus Christ*.

THROUGH both these, in their several Ways of Operation there proceedeth from the *real Object of our Faith, Christ* as the Image of GOD, a *transforming Power*, whereby the Soul is changed into the *same Image*. But we may yet a little farther contemplate these Things, in some Instances wherein the Glory of GOD and our own Duty are concerned.

1. THE *Glory of GOD's Wisdom* is exalted, and the Pride of the Imaginations of Men is proportionably debased. And in these two consists the real Foundation of all Religion in our Souls.

2. THERE is a peculiar Ground of the spiritual Efficacy of this *Representation* of GOD. The Revelation that He hath made of Himself, and of the glorious Properties of his Nature in the Works of Creation and Providence, are in themselves *clear, plain and manifest*, Psal. xix. 1, 2. Rom. i. 21, 22. Those which are made in *Christ* are  
*sublime*

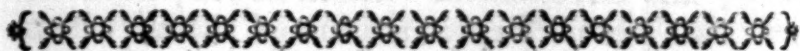
*sublime and mysterious.* Howbeit the Knowledge we have of Him as He is represented unto us in *Christ*, is far more clear, certain, steady, effectual and operative, than any we can attain to in and by all other Ways of Revelation. The Reason hereof is, not only because there is a more full and extensive Revelation made of GOD, his Counsels and his Will, in *Christ* and the Gospel, than in all the Works of Creation and Providence; but because this Revelation and Representation of GOD is received by *Faith* alone, and the other by *Reason* only; and it is *Faith* that is the Principle of spiritual Light and Life in us. What is received thereby is operative and effectual unto all the Ends of the Life of GOD.

3. IT is the highest *Degeneracy* from the Mystery of Christian Religion, for Men to satisfy themselves in natural Discoveries of the *Divine Being*, and Excellencies without an Acquaintance with that perfect Representation of them, which is made in the Person of *Christ* in the Gospel. It is confessed that there may be good Use made of the Evidence which Reason gives, concerning the Being and Rule of GOD. But to rest herein, to esteem it the *best* and most *perfect* Knowledge of GOD that we can attain, not to rise up unto the more full, perfect and evident Manifestation of Himself that He hath *made in Christ*, is a Declaration of our Unbelief, and a virtual Renunciation of the Gospel. This is the Spring of that Declension unto a meer natural Religion, which discovers itself in many, and usually ends in the exprefs Denial of the divine Person of *Christ*.

4. BECAUSE GOD is not *thus known*, it is that the Knowledge of Him is so barren and fruitless in the World. It were easy to produce, yea,  
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endless to number the Testimonies that might be produced out of *Heathen* Writers, given unto the *Being* and *Existence* of *God*, his *Authority*, *Monarchy* and *Rule*: Yet what were the Effects of that Knowledge which they had; besides that wretched *Idolatry* wherein they were all immersed? As the Apostle declares, *Rom. i.* it rescued them from no Kind of Wickedness and Villainy, as He there also manifests. So it is among many that are called Christians at this Day Great Pretence there is unto the Knowledge of *God*; yet did flagitious Sins and Wickedness scarce ever more abound among the *Heathens* themselves. It is the Knowledge of *God* in *Christ* alone that is effectual to work the Soul unto a Conformity unto Him. Those alone who behold the Glory of *God* in the Face of *Jesus Christ*, are changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory.



## CHAP. VI.

*Power and Efficacy communicated unto Christ for the Salvation of the Church.*

**I**T is by the Exercise and Discharge of the Office of *Christ* as the *King*, *Priest* and *Prophet* of the Church, that we are redeemed, sanctified and saved. Thereby doth He immediately communicate all Gospel Benefits unto us, gives us an Access unto *God* here by Grace, and in Glory hereafter. For He saves us as He is the *Mediator* between *God* and Man. But hereon an Enquiry may be made, whence it is that the *Acts* and *Duties* of this Office of *Christ* should have such a Pow-



a Power and Efficacy? And this is his holy *mysterious Person*; from thence all Power and Efficacy is derived and transfused into his Offices.

A TRUTH this is of that Importance, that the Declaration of it, is the principal Design of one *entire Book* of the Holy Scriptures, namely, the *Epistle to the Hebrews*. That the glorious Excellency of the Person of *Christ* doth enable Him in the Discharge of his Offices to accomplish those Ends which none other could, is the Sum and Substance of the *Doctrinal Part* of that Discourse. Here therefore we must a little fix our Meditations; and our Interest calls us thereunto. For if it be so it is evident that we can receive no Good, no Benefit by Virtue of any Office of *Christ*, nor any Fruits of their Exercise, without an actual Respect of Faith unto his Person. God gave of old both *Kings, Priests and Prophets* unto the Church. He both anointed them unto their Offices, directed them in their Discharge, was present with them in their Work, and accepted of their Duties. Yet by none of them, nor by all of them together was the Church supernaturally enlightened, internally ruled, or eternally saved, nor could it so be.

Two Things were required unto the *Person* of *Christ*, that his *Offices* might be effectual unto the Salvation of the Church. And they are such as that their *Contrivance* in the Constitution of one and the same Person, no created Wisdom could reach.

I. THE first of these is, that He should have a *Nature provided for Him*, which originally was not his own. For in his *divine Nature* singly consider'd, He had no such Relation unto them

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for whom He was to discharge his Offices, as was necessary to communicate the Benefit of them, nor could He discharge their principal Duties. GOD could not die, nor rise again, nor be exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour in his *divine Nature*. Nor was there that especial Alliance between it and ours, as should give us an especial Interest in what was done thereby. It was Mankind in whose Behalf He was to exercise these Offices. He was not to bear them with Respect unto the *Angels*, and therefore took not their Nature on Him. But GOD *prepared a Body for Him*; that is, an human Nature, *Heb. x. 5.* And this was absolutely necessary unto the Discharge of his Offices. For,

(1.) THOSE Acts of his Offices whereon the Sanctification and Salvation of the Church principally depend, could not be performed but in and by that Nature. Therein alone could He yield Obedience unto the Law that it might be *fulfilled in us*, without which we could not stand in Judgment before GOD. See *Rom. viii. 3. ch. x. 3, 4.* Therein alone could He undergo the *Curse of the Law*, or be *made a Curse for us*, that the Blessing might come upon us, *Gal. iii. 13, 14.* It was necessary that as a Priest He should have Something of his own to offer unto GOD to make Atonement for Sin, *Heb. viii. 3.* The like may be said of his whole Ministry on the Earth, of all the Effects of his Incarnation.

(2.) HEREIN that *Alliance* between Him and the Church, which were necessary to entitle it unto the Participation of the Benefits of his Mediation, depend. For hereby He became our *Goel*, the next of Kin, unto whom belong'd the Right of Redemption, and from whom alone we could

could claim Relief in our lost Condition. Wherefore had He not been Partaker of our Nature, we could have received no Benefit by any Office He could have undertaken. This therefore was necessary unto the Constitution of his Person with Respect unto his Offices. But,

II. THERE was yet more required thereto, to render his *Offices* effectual. Not one of them could have been so, had He been no more than a Man.

(I.) HE could not have been the *great and singular Prophet of the Church*, had He been a Man only, tho' never so excellent and glorious, and that for these three Reasons:

[I.] HE was to be the Prophet of the *whole Catholick Church*, that is, of all the Elect of GOD, in all Ages and Places, from the Beginning of the World unto the End thereof. The Church was never without a Prophet; that is, one on whom it was incumbent to reveal unto it, and instruct it in the Will of GOD, nor can be so unto the Consummation of all Things. This is *Christ* alone. For,

I.) FROM the Beginning, from the Giving of the first Promise, the Son of GOD did in an especial Manner *undertake the Care of the Church*, as to all the Ends of the Wisdom, Will and Grace of GOD. And its Instruction in the Will of GOD, its saving Illumination and spiritual Wisdom, is of such Importance that without it, none can be Partaker of any other Blessings whatever. In this Instruction and Illumination consists the Discharge of the propheticall Office of *Christ*.



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2.) UPON the Account of his Susception of his Office even before his Incarnation, consider'd as GOD, He is said to act in it so as to be *sent of GOD* unto his Work, *Mich. v. 2. The Ruler of Israel, whose Goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. His Goings forth are not his eternal Generation*, which consists in one individual, eternal Act of the Father: But it is the Egrefs, the Exercise of his Power and Care for the Church; that is so expressed. These were from the *Beginning*, the first Foundation of the Church, in Answer to his everlasting Counsels. So was He the *Prophet* of the Church even before his Incarnation, to instruct it, to communicate spiritual and saving Light unto it. So He testified concerning Himself to the *Jews, before Abraham was, I am*, John viii. 55. He was so before *Abraham*, as that the Care of the Church was then and always from the Beginning on Him, And He discharged this Office four Ways:

(1. BY *personal Appearances* in the Shape of a Man, as an Indication of his future Incarnation; and under those Appearances instructing the Church. So He appear'd unto *Abraham*, to *Jacob*, to *Moses*, to *Joshua*. And those peculiar Appearances of the Person of the Son for the Instruction of Believers, are a full Demonstration that the Care and Work of it were committed unto Him in a peculiar Manner.

(2. BY the *Ministry of Angels*. Upon his Undertaking to be the Mediator for the Church with GOD, the Angels were in a peculiar Manner put into Dependence on Him, even as He became a new and immediate Head unto the whole Creation; and whatever Instruction was thereby given unto the Church in the Mind and Will of  
GOD,

GOD, was immediately from Him, as the great Prophet.

(3. By *sending his Holy Spirit* to inspire, act and guide the Prophets by whom GOD would reveal Himself. GOD spake unto them by the *Mouth of his Holy Prophets from the Beginning of the World*, Luke i. 70. But it was the *Spirit of Christ* that was in them, that spake by them, that revealed the Things which concerned the Salvation of the Church, *Pet. i. 11, 12.*

(4. By the *Ministry of holy Men*, acted and moved by his Spirit. So He gave forth the Word that was written for an everlasting Rule of Faith and Obedience unto the Church.

THUS were the Office and Work of instructing the Church on his Hand alone from the Beginning, and thus were they by Him discharged. This was not a Work for Him who was but a Man. His human Nature had no Existence untill the Fulness of Time, and therefore could effect nothing before.

IT is true, we have under the Gospel many unspeakable Advantages from the *prophetical Office of Christ*, above what they enjoyed under the Old Testament. But He was the Prophet of the Church in all Ages. Only He hath given out the Knowledge of the Mind of GOD in different Degrees and Measures; that which was most perfect, being for many Reasons reserved unto the Times of the Gospel.

[2.] THE *full Comprehension of the Mind and Will of GOD*, of the whole Divine Counsel concerning the Salvation of the Church, could not  
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at once reside in the Mind of any meer Creature. Yet was this necessary unto Him who was to be the Prophet of the Church, that is, the Fountain of Truth, Life and Knowledge unto it. Hence is his Name *Wondrousful, Counsellor*, as He who was a Participant of all the eternal Counsels of GOD; whereon in Him, as incarnate, all the Treasures of divine Wisdom and Knowledge were hid, *Col. ii. 3.*

HE says that all *that ever came before Him were Thieves and Robbers, but the Sheep did not hear them*, John x. 5. This some of old impiously applied unto the Prophets of the Old Testament; whereas He intended it only of those *false Prophets* who pretended of themselves that they, any of them, were the *Messiah*, the Great Shepherd of the Sheep, whom his elect Sheep would not attend unto. But it is true that all who went before Him, neither separately nor jointly had the Knowledge of GOD, so as to declare Him fully unto the Church. It is the most fond and wicked Imagination of the *Socinians*, invented to countenance their Disbelief and Hatred of his Divine Person, that during the Time of his Flesh *He was taken up into Heaven and there taught the Doctrine of the Gospel*, as *Mahomet* feign'd concerning himself and his *Alcoran*. The Reason and Foundation of his perfect Knowledge of GOD, was his being the only begotten Son in the Bosom of the Father: And not a fictitious Rapture of his human Nature. To this Purpose have we his own Testimony, *John iii. 11. And no Man hath ascended up to Heaven, but He that came down from Heaven, even the Son of Man which is in Heaven.* The Matter whereof He treats is the Revelation of heavenly Things.



[3.] THE Spirit of GOD dwelling in Him in all the Fulness of his Graces and Gifts, gave Him an Understanding peculiar unto Himself; as above that of all Creatures, so beneath the essential Omniscience of the Divine Nature. Hence some Things, as He was a Man, He *knew not*, Mark xiii. 32. But He is the *Prophet* of the Church in his whole entire Person, and revealed the Counsel of GOD, as He was in Heaven in the Bosom of the Father. Cursed be he that trusteth in Man that maketh Flesh his Arm, as to the Revelations of the Counsels of GOD. Here lies the Safety, the Glory of the Church. How deplorable is the Darkness of Mankind in their Ignorance of GOD and heavenly Things? In what Ways of Vanity and Misery have the Generality of them wander'd ever since our first Apostacy from GOD? Nothing but Hell is more full of Horror and Confusion, than the Minds and Ways of Men destitute of heavenly Light: How miserably did those among them who boasted themselves to be *wise*, *wax foolish* in their Imaginations? He who is infinitely good and compassionate did from the Beginning give some Relief in this woful State by such Parcels of divine Revelations as He thought meet to communicate unto them by the Prophets of old, such as they were able to receive. By them He set up a *Light shining in a dark Place*, as the Light of Stars in the Night. But it was the rising of the *Sun of Righteousness* alone that dispelled the Darkness that was on the Earth, the thick Darkness that was on the People, bringing Life and Immortality to Light by the Gospel. The divine Person of the Son of GOD, in whom were all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, who is in the Bosom of the Father, hath now made known all Things unto the Church, giving us the perfect *Idea* and  
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Certainty of all sacred Truth, and the full Assurance of Things invisible and eternal.

(2.) THE same also is the State of Things with Respect unto his *Kingly Office and Power*.

No one Act of his Kingly Office can be aright conceived or acknowledged, without a Respect had unto his *divine Person*. I shall instance only in two Things in general.

1.) THE *Extent of his Power and Rule* gives Evidence hereunto. It is over the *whole Creation of GOD*. All Power is given Him in Heaven and Earth, Matt. xxviii. 18. All Things are put under his Feet, He only excepted who put all Things under Him, 1 Cor. xv. 27. And He is made Head over all Things unto the Church, Ephes. i. 22. Not only those who are above the Rule of external Law, as the holy Angels; and those who have cast off all such Rule, as the Devils themselves; but all Things that in their own Nature are not capable of Obedience to an external Law or Rule, as the whole *inanimate Creation*, Heaven and Earth and the Sea, with all Things in them and under them, Phil. ii. 10. with the *dead Bodies of Men*, which He shall raise at the Last Day. For this Power over the whole Creation is not only a *moral Right* to govern it; but it is also accompanied with *Virtue, Force*, or Almighty Power to act, order, and dispose of it at his Pleasure. So is it described by the Apostle from the *Psalmist*, Heb. i. 10, 11, 12. Thou, LORD, in the Beginning hast laid the Foundation of the Earth, and the Heavens are the Work of thy Hands. They shall perish, but Thou remainest, and they shall all wax old as doth a Garment. And as a Vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but Thou art

art the same, and thy Years fail not. That Power is required unto his Kingly Office, whereby He created all Things in the Beginning; and shall change them all as a Man folds up a Vesture, in the End. Omnipotency accompanied with Eternity and Immutability, are required hereunto. It is a vain Imagination to suppose that this *Power* can reside in a *meer Creature* however glorified and exalted. All essential, divine Properties are concurrent with it; and inseparable from it. And where the Properties of GOD are, there is the Nature of GOD; for his Being and his Properties are one and the same.

AGAIN, To suppose, that the LORD *Christ*, as the King and Head of the Church, hath not an *infinite, divine Power*, whereby He is able always to relieve, succour, save and deliver it, if it were to be done by the Alteration of the whole, or any Part of GOD's Creation so as that the Fire should not burn, nor the Water overwhelm them, nor Men be able to retain their Thoughts or Ability one Moment to afflict them; and that their Distresses are not always *Effects* of his Wisdom, and never from the *Defect* of his Power, is utterly to overthrow all Faith, Hope, and the whole of Religion itself. Ascribe therefore unto the LORD *Christ* in the Exercise of his *Kingly Office*, only a *moral Power*, operative by Rules and Laws, with the Help of external Instruments; deprive Him of Omnipresence, and Omniscience, with infinite Divine Power to be acted at his Pleasure in and over the whole Creation, and you rase the Foundation of all Christian Faith and Hope to the Ground. There are no true Believers who will part with their Faith herein for the whole World; namely, that the LORD *Jesus Christ* is able by his *divine Power* and *Presence* immediately to aid, relieve,



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relieve, and deliver them in every Moment of their Surprisals, Fear and Dangers, in every Trial and Duty they may be called unto, in every Difficulty they have to conflict withall. And to expect these Things any otherwise but by Virtue of his Divine Nature, is wofully to deceive our own Souls. For this is the Work of GOD.

[2.] *THE Rule of Christ*, as King of the Church, is *internal* and *spiritual* over the Minds, Souls and Consciences of all that believe. There is no *one gracious acting of Soul* in any one Believer at any Time in the whole World, either in Opposition to Sin, or the Performance of Duty, but it is under the Guidance of the Kingly Power of *Christ*. I suppose we have herein not only the common Faith, but also the common Experience of them all. They know that in their *spiritual Life* it is He that liveth in them as the efficient Cause of all its Acts, and that without Him they can do nothing. Unto Him they have Respect in every the most secret Actings of Grace, not only performed as *under his Eye*, but by his *Assistance*; on every Occasion do they immediately in the internal Actings of their Minds look unto Him, as one more present with their Souls than they are with themselves; and have no Thought of the least Distance of his Knowledge or Power. And two Things are required hereto:

I.) THAT He be *καταδυστας*, that He have an actual *Inspection* into all the Dispositions, Thoughts and internal Actings of all Believers in the whole World every Moment. Without this, He cannot bear that *Rule* in their Souls which we have described, nor can they act *Faith* in Him, as their Occasions require. No Man can live by Faith on *Christ*, no Man can depend on his sovereign Power,

Power, who is not persuaded, that all the *Frames of his Heart*, all the *secret Groans and Sighs of his Spirit*, all the *inward Labourings of his Soul* against Sin, and after Conformity to Himself, are continually under his Eye. Wherefore it is said that *all Things are naked and opened unto his Eyes*, Heb. iv. 13. And He says of Himself, that He *searcheth*, that is, knoweth the *Hearts and Reins of Men*, Rev. ii. 23. And if these Things are not the peculiar Properties of the Divine Nature, I know nothing that may be so esteemed.

2.) THERE is required hereto, an *Influence of Power* into all the internal Actings of the Souls of Believers; an intimate, efficacious Operation, with them in every Duty, and under every Temptation. These all of them expect and receive from Him, as the King and Head of the Church. This also is an Effect of divine and infinite Power. And to deny these Things unto the *LORD Christ*, is to rase the Foundation of Christian Religion. Neither *Faith* in Him, nor *Love* unto Him, nor *Dependance* on Him, nor *Obedience* unto his Authority, can be preserved one Moment, without a Persuasion of his immediate Inspection into the Hearts, Minds and Thoughts of all Men, with a real Influence into all the Actings of the Life of God in all them that believe. And the Want of the Faith hereof is that which hath disjoined the Minds of many from Adherence unto Him; and hath produced a lifeless Carcass of Christian Religion, instead of the saving Power thereof.

(3.) THE same may be said concerning his Sacerdotal Office, and all the Acts of it. It was in and by the human Nature that He offer'd Himself a Sacrifice for us. He had *somewhat of his own* to offer, Heb. viii. 3. And to that End a *Body was pre-*

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*pared for Him*, Chap. x. 5. But it was not the Work of a Man by one Offering, and that of Himself, to expiate the Sins of the whole Church, and forever to perfect them that are sanctified.

THIS is the Sum of what we plead for. We can have no due Consideration of the Offices of *Christ*, can receive no Benefit by them, nor perform any Act of Duty with Respect unto them, or any of them, unless Faith in his Divine Person be actually exercised as the Foundation of the whole. For that is it whence all their Glory, Power and Efficacy are derived. Whatever therefore we do with Respect unto his *Rule*, whatever we receive by the Communication of his Spirit, whatever we learn from his Word by the Teachings of his Spirit, whatever Benefit we expect and receive by his Sacrifice and Intercession on our Behalf, our Faith in them all, and concerning them all, is terminated on his Divine Person. The Church is saved by his Offices, because they are his. This is the Substance of the Testimony given concerning Him, by GOD even the Father, *I John v. 10, 11. This is the Witness that GOD hath testified concerning his Son, that GOD hath given unto us eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son.* In Him it was originally, and from Him do we receive it in the Discharge of his Office; for this Life is in the Son of GOD.

HENCE it is that all those by whom the divine Person of *Christ* is denied, are forced to give such a Description of his Offices, that it is utterly impossible the Church should be saved by the Discharge of them.





CHAP. VII.

*Honour due to the Person of CHRIST;  
the Nature and Causes of it.*

**M**ANY other Considerations relating to the Glory and Honour of the *Person of Christ*, may be taken from all the fundamental Principles of Religion. And our Duty it is in them all, to consider the *Apostle and High-Priest of our Profession, the Author and Finisher of our Faith*. I shall not insist on more, but proceed unto those Principles which are immediately directive of our Duty towards Him; without diligent Attendance whereunto, we do but in vain bear the Name of *Christians*. And the Substance of what is designed may be included in the following Assertion.

THE Glory, Life, and Power of *Christian Religion*, as seated in the Souls of Men, with all the Acts and Duties which properly belong thereto, and all the Benefits we receive by it, with the whole of the Honour and Glory that arise to GOD thereby, have all of them their Nature and Reason, from their Relation unto the Person of *Christ*.

THE Respect which we have in all the Acts of Religion unto the Person of *Christ* may be reduced unto these four Heads; 1. Honour. 2. Obedience. 3. Conformity. 4. The Use we make of Him, for attaining all Graces and Glory. And hereunto the

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whole of our Religion, as it is *Christian*, may be reduced.

I. THE Person of *Christ* is the Object of divine Honour and Worship; and that upon the Account of his divine Nature. It implies a Contradiction, that any Creature should upon any Account, be the proper Object of divine Worship; unless the divine essential Excellencies be transfused into it, whereby it would cease to be a Creature. For that Worship is nothing but the Ascription of divine Excellencies unto what is so worshipped. But the LORD *Christ*, in his whole entire Person, is the SON OF GOD incarnate, GOD *manifest in the Flesh*. His infinite Condescension in the Assumption of our Nature, did no Way divest Him of his divine essential Excellencies. For a Time, they were shadowed thereby, from the Eyes of Men; when He *made Himself of no Reputation*, and took on Him the *Form of a Servant*. But He eternally and unchangeably continued in the *Form of GOD*, and thought it no Robbery to be equal unto Him. Phil. ii. 6, 7. He can no more really cease to be GOD, than GOD can cease to be. Wherefore his being cloathed with our Nature, derogates nothing from the true Reason of divine Worship due unto Him, but adds an effectual Motive unto it. He is therefore the immediate Object of all Duties of Religion, internal and external. And in the Dispensation of GOD towards us, none of them can be performed in a due Manner without a Respect unto Him.

THIS then in the first Place is to be confirmed; namely, that all divine Honour is due unto the Son of GOD incarnate, that is, the Person of *Christ*. *John* v. 23. It is the Will of the Father, That all Men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father: He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not

not the Father that sent Him. Some Considerations on this divine Testimony will confirm our Position. It is of the Son incarnate that the Words are spoken; as all Judgment was committed unto Him by the Father, as He was *sent by Him*, ver. 22. that is, of the whole Person of *Christ* in the Exercise of his mediatory Office. And with respect hereunto it is, that the Mind of GOD is peculiarly revealed. The Way whereby GOD manifesteth his Will, that all Men should thus *honour the Son*, as they honour the Father, is by committing all Power, Authority and Judgment unto Him; ver. 20, 21, 22. *For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all Things that Himself doth; and He will shew Him greater Works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the Dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will. For the Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment unto the Son.* Not that these Things are the formal Reason of the divine Honour which is to be given Him; but they are Reasons of it, in that they are Evidences of his being the Son of GOD.

HE is therefore to be honoured by us, according to the Will of GOD, *καθώς*, in like Manner as we honour the Father.

[1.] WITH the *same Honour*; that is, divine, sacred, religious and supreme. To honour the Father with other Honour, is to dishonour Him. When Men design to give Honour to GOD which is not truly Divine, it is Idolatry. For this Honour in Truth is nothing but the Ascription of all divine Excellencies unto Him. Whereon when Men ascribe unto Him that which is not so, they fall into Idolatry by the Worship of their own Imaginations. So was it with the *Israelites* when they thought to have given Glory to GOD, by making a golden Calf whereon



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whereon they proclaimed a Feast unto *Jehovah*, Exod. xxxii. 5. And so was it with the *Heathens* in all their Images of GOD, and the Glory which they designed to give Him thereby, as the Apostle declares, *Rom. i. 23,—25.* This is one Kind of Idolatry, as the other is, the ascribing unto Creatures any Thing that is peculiar to GOD, any divine Excellency. And we do not honour GOD the Father with one kind of Honour, and the Son with another. That were not to honour the Son, *καθώς*, as we honour the Father, but in a Way infinitely different from it.

[2.] IN the same Manner, with the same Faith, Love, Reverence, and Obedience, in all Things, in all Acts and Duties of Religion whatever. This distinct Honour is to be given unto the Person of the Son by Virtue of this Command of the Father, though originally on the Account of his *Oneness* in Nature with the Father. And our Duty herein is pressed with the highest Enforcement; *He that honours not the Son, honours not the Father. He who denieth the Son (herein) hath not the Father; but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also*, 1 John ii. 23. If we are wanting herein; whatever we pretend, we do not worship nor honour GOD at all. And there is Reason to give this Caution; Reason to fear that this fundamental Principle of our Religion, is, if not disbelieved, yet not much attended to in the World. Many who profess a Respect unto the divine Being, have little Regard unto the Person of the Son in all their Religion. For although they may admit of a customary Interposition of his Name in their religious Worship; yet the same distinct Veneration of Him as of the Father, they seem not to understand, or to be exercised in. Howbeit all the Acceptance of our Persons and Duties with GOD, depends on this one Condition, *that we ho-*

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nour the Son, even as we honour the Father. To honour the Son as we ought to honour the Father, is that which makes us *Christians*, and which nothing else will so.

THIS Honour of the Person of *Christ* may be considered in the Duties of it, and in the Principle, Life, or Spring of these Duties.

THE Duties whereby we ascribe and express divine Honour unto *Christ*, may be reduced unto two Heads. 1.) Adoration. 2.) Invocation.

ADORATION is the Prostration of Soul before Him as GOD, in the Acknowledgment of his divine Excellencies and the Ascription of them unto Him. It is expressed in the *Old Testament* by השתחוה, that is, humbly to bow down ourselves or our Souls unto GOD. The *LXX* render it constantly by προσκυνέω; which is the Word used in the *New Testament* unto the same Purpose. The *Latins* expressed it usually by *adoro*. And those Words, though of other Derivations, are of the same Signification with that in the *Hebrew*: And they do all of them include some external Sign of inward Reverence, or a Readiness thereunto. And these external Signs are of two Sorts. (1. Such as are natural and occasional. (2. Such as are solemn or instituted.

(1. OF the first Sort are the lifting up of our Eyes and Hands towards heaven upon our Thoughts of Him; and sometimes the casting down of our whole Persons before Him, which deep Thoughts with Reverence will produce. Outward instituted Signs of this internal Adoration are all the Ordinances of evangelical Worship. In and by them do we solemnly profess and express our inward Veneration of Him. This Adoration is due continually to the  
Person.

Person of *Christ*, and that as in the Exercise of the Office of Mediation. It is due unto Him from the whole rational Creation of GOD: So is it given in Charge unto the Angels above. For when He bro't the First-begotten into the World, he said, προσκυνήσατωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι Θεοῦ, (that is, השתחוה לו כל אלהים, *worship Him all ye Gods*, Psal. xcvi. 7. *Let all the Angels of GOD worship Him*, adore Him, bow down before Him, *Heb. i. 6.* The Design of the whole Chapter being to express the divine Honour that is due unto the Person of *Christ*, with the Grounds thereof. This is the Command given also unto the Church, *He is thy LORD, and worship thou Him*, Psal. xlv. 11. A glorious Representation hereof, whether in the Church above, or in that militant here on the Earth, is given us, *Rev. v. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.* *And I beheld and lo, in the Midst of the Throne, and of the four living Creatures, and in the Midst of the Elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven Horns and seven Eyes, which are the seven Spirits of GOD sent forth into all the Earth. And he came and took the Book out of the Right-Hand of Him that sat upon the Throne. And when he had taken the Book, the four Beasts and four and twenty Elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them Harps, and golden Vials full of Odours, which are the Prayers of Saints. And they sung a new Song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof; for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto GOD by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation. And hast made us unto our GOD Kings and Priests, and we shall reign on the Earth. And I beheld, and I heard the Voice of many Angels round about the Throne, and the Beasts, and the Elders, and the Number of them was ten thousand Times ten Thousand, and Thousands of Thousands. Saying with a loud Voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive*



receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing. And every Creature which is in Heaven, and on the Earth, and under the Earth, and such as are in the Sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, Honour, Glory, and Power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever! And the four Beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty Elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever. The especial Object of divine Adoration, the Motives unto it, and the Nature of it, or what it consisteth in, are here declared.

FIRST, The Object of it is *Christ*, distinctly from the Father, and jointly with Him. And he is proposed, both as having fulfilled the Work of his Mediation in his Incarnation and Oblation; as a *Lamb slain*: And in his glorious Exaltation in the *Midst of the Throne of GOD*. The principal Thing that the *Heathen* of old observed concerning *Christian* Religion, was that in it, *Praises were sung to Christ as unto GOD*.

SECONDLY, The *Motives* unto this Adoration are the unspeakable Benefits which we receive by his Mediation; *Thou art worthy, for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto GOD*. Hereon the same Glory, the same Honour is ascribed unto Him as unto *GOD the Father*; *Blessing, Honour, Glory, and Power*, be unto Him that sits on the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

THIRDLY, The *Nature* of his Adoration is described to consist in three Things. 1. Solemn Prostration. And the four living Creatures said, *Amen*. And the four and twenty Elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever. 2. In the Ascription of all divine Honour and Glory, as it is  
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at large expressed, *ver. 11, 12, 13.* 3. In the Way of expressing this Adoration which is by their Praises; *they sung a new Song*; that is, of Praise, for so are all those *Psalms*, which have that Title of a *new Song*. And in these Things, namely, solemn Prostration of Soul in the Acknowledgment of divine Excellencies, Ascriptions of Glory and Honour with Praise, doth religious Adoration consist. And they belong not unto the great holy Society of them who worship above and here below, whose Hearts are not always ready unto this solemn Adoration of *the Lamb*, and who are not on all Occasions exercised therein. And this Adoration of *Christ* doth differ from the Adoration of *GOD* absolutely considered, and of *GOD* as the Father, not in its *Nature*, but meerly on the Account of its *especial Motives*. The principal Motive unto the Adoration of *GOD* absolutely considered, is the Work of Creation, the Manifestation of his Glory therein, with all the Effects of his Power and Goodness thereon ensuing. So it is declared, *Rev. iv. 8, 9, 10, 11.* *Thou art worthy, O LORD, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power, for Thou hast created all Things, and for thy Pleasure they are and were created.* And the principal Motive unto the Adoration of *GOD* as the Father, is that eternal Love, Grace and Goodness, which He is the Fountain of in a peculiar Manner, *Ephes. i. 4, 5.* But the great Motive unto the Adoration of *Christ* is the Work of Redemption, *Rev. v. 12.* *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing.* The Reason whereof is given, *ver. 9, 10.* *For Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us unto GOD by thy Blood, and hast made us unto GOD Kings and Priests.* The Adoration is the same, *ver. 13.* *Blessing, Honour, Glory, and Power, be unto Him that sitteth on the Throne, and unto the Lamb for evermore!* But the immediate *Motives* of it are

different, as its Objects are distinct. Herein no small Part of the Life of *Christian* Religion doth consist. The humbling of our Souls before the **LORD** *Christ* from an Apprehension of his divine Excellencies, the Ascription of Glory, Honour, Praise, with Thanksgiving unto Him on the great Motive of the Work of Redemption with the blessed Effects thereof, are Things wherein the Life of Faith is continually exercised. Nor can we have any Evidence of an Interest in that Blessedness which consists in the eternal Affignation of all Glory unto Him in Heaven, if we are not exercised to this worship of Him on Earth.

2.) INVOCATION is the second general Branch of divine Honour, of that Honour which is due and paid unto the Son, as unto the Father. This is the first Exercise of divine Faith, the Breath of the spiritual Life. And it consisteth in two Things. *First*, an Ascription of all divine Excellencies unto Him whom we invoke. This is essential unto Prayer, which without it is but vain Babbling. Whoever cometh unto **GOD** hereby, must believe that He is, and that He is the Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. *Secondly*, there is in it also a *Representation* of our Wills, Affections, and Desires to Him on whom we call, with an Expectation of being heard and relieved, by Virtue of his divine Excellencies. This is the proper Acting of Faith with respect unto ourselves; and hereby it is our Duty to give Honour unto the Person of *Christ*. When he Himself died in the Flesh, He committed his departing Soul by solemn Invocation into the Hands of his Father, *Psal. xxxi. 5. Luke xxiii. 46. Father, into thy Hands I commit my Spirit.* And to evidence that it is the Will of **GOD**, that we should honour the Son, as we honour the Father, even as the Son Himself in his human Nature, who is our Example, honoured the Father: He who first died



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in the Faith of the Gospel, bequeathed his departing Soul into the Hands of *Jesus Christ* by solemn Invocation, *Acts vii. 59. They stoned Stephen, ἐκαλύμμενον*, solemnly invoking and saying, *LORD Jesus receive my Spirit*. And having by Faith and Prayer, left his own Soul safe in the Hand of the *LORD Jesus*, he adds one Petition more unto Him, wherewith he died, *LORD lay not this Sin to their Charge*, ver. 60. Herein did he give divine Honour unto *Christ* in the especial Invocation of his Name, in the highest Instances that can be conceived. In his first Request, wherein he committed his departing Soul into his Hands, he ascribed unto Him divine Omniscience, Omnipresence, Love, and Power. And in the latter for his Enemies, divine Authority and Mercy to be exercised in the Pardon of Sin. In his Example is the Rule established, for the especial Invocation of *Christ* for the Effects of divine Power and Mercy. Hence the Apostle describeth the Church or Believers, and distinguisheth it, or them, from all others, by the Discharge of their Duty, *1 Cor. i. 2. With all that call on the Name of our LORD Jesus Christ, both their LORD and ours*. To call on the Name of the *LORD Jesus* expresseth solemn Invocation in the Way of religious Worship. The *Jews* did call on the Name of *GOD*. All others in their Way called on the Names of their Gods. This is that whereby the Church is distinguished from them all; *It calls on the Name of our LORD Jesus Christ*. He requires that as we believe on *GOD*, that is, the Father, so we should believe on Him, also, and therein honour the Son, as we honour the Father, *John xiv. 1*. But the Apostle treating of the Nature and Efficacy of this Invocation, affirms, that we cannot call on Him, in whom we have not believed, *Rom. x. 14*. Whence it follows on the contrary, that He on whom we are bound to believe, on Him it is our Duty to call.

So the whole Scripture is closed with a Prayer of the Church unto the LORD *Christ*, expressing their Faith in Him; *Even so come LORD Jesus*, Rev. xxii. 20. There is not any one Reason of Prayer, not any one Motive unto it, nor any Consideration of its Use or Efficacy, but renders this peculiar Invocation of *Christ* a necessary Duty. Two Things in general are required to render the Duty of Invocation lawful and useful. *First*, That it have a proper *Object*: *Secondly*, That it have prevalent Motives to it. These in Concurrence are the Ground of all religious Worship in general, and of Prayer in particular. So are they laid down as the Foundation of all Religion, *Exod. xx. 2, 3. I am the LORD thy GOD*, that is the proper Object of all religious Worship, *which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the House of Bondage*, which being typically representative of all divine Benefits, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, is the grand Motive thereto. The want of both these in all meer Creatures, Saints and Angels, make the Invocation of them, not only useless, but idolatrous. But they both eminently concur in the Person of *Christ*. All the Perfections of the divine Nature are in Him, whence He is the proper Object of religious Invocation. On this Account when He acted in and towards the Church, as the great *Angel of the Covenant*, GOD instructed the People unto all religious Observance of Him, and Obedience unto Him, *Exod. xxiii. 21. Beware of Him and obey his Voice, provoke Him not, for He will not pardon your Transgressions, for my Name is in Him*. Because the Name of GOD was in Him, that is, the divine Nature with sovereign Authority to punish or pardon Sin, therefore was all religious Obedience due unto Him. And no Motives are wanting hereunto. All that the LORD *Christ* hath done for us, and all the Principles of Love, Grace, Compassion, and Power,

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from whence what he hath so done did proceed, are all of this Nature. And they are accompanied with the Encouragement of his Relation unto us, and Charge concerning us. Take away this Duty, and the peculiar Advantage of *Christian* Religion is destroyed.

WHEREFORE it being our Duty to invoke the Name of *Christ* in a particular Manner, we may consider on what Occasions, and in what Seasons this peculiar Invocation of *Christ* is necessary for us, and most acceptable unto Him.

(I. TIMES of great Distresses in Conscience thro' Temptations and Desertions, are Seasons requiring an Application unto *Christ* by especial Invocation. Persons in such Conditions when their Souls, as the *Psalmist* speaks, *are overwhelmed in them*, are continually solicitous about Compassion and Deliverance. Some Relief, some Refreshment they often find in Compassion from them who either have been in the same Condition themselves, or by Scripture-Light do know the Terror of the LORD. When their Complaints are despised, and their Troubles ascribed unto other Causes than what they are really sensible of and feel within themselves, as is commonly done by *Physicians of no Value*, it is an Aggravation of their Distress. And they greatly value every sincere Endeavour for Relief, either by Counsel or Prayer. In this State the LORD *Christ* in the Gospel is proposed, as He alone who is able to relieve them. In that Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is touched with a Feeling of our Infirmities, and knows how to have Compassion on them. And He alone is able to succour and deliver them. *He is able to succour them that are tempted*, Heb. ii. 18. Hereon are they drawn, constrained, encouraged to make Application unto Him by  
Prayer,



Prayer, that He would deal with them according to his Compassion and Power. This is a Season rendring the Discharge of this Duty necessary. And hereby have innumerable Souls found Consolation, Refreshment and Deliverance.

(2. TIMES of gracious Discoveries either of the Glory of *Christ* Himself, or of his Love unto us, are Seasons that call for this Duty. The Glory of *Christ* in his Person and Offices is always the same. And the Revelation that is made of it in the Scripture varieth not. But as to our Perception of it whereby our Hearts are affected with it in an especial Manner, there are apparent Seasons of it, which no Believers are unacquainted with. Sometimes such a Sense of it is attained under the Dispensation of the Word, wherein as *Christ* on the one Hand is set forth evidently crucified before our Eyes, so on the other he is gloriously exalted. Sometimes it is so in Prayer, in Meditation, in Contemplation of Him. As an Ability was given to the bodily Sight of *Stephen*, to see upon the opening of the Heavens, the Glory of GOD, and *Jesus standing at his Right-Hand*, Acts vii. 56, 57. so He opens the Vail sometimes, and gives a clear affecting Discovery unto the Souls of Believers: And in such Seasons are they drawn forth unto Invocation and Praise. This is our Duty, this will be our Wisdom, upon affecting Discoveries of the Glory of *Christ*; to apply ourselves unto Him by Invocation or Praise; and thereby will the Refreshment and Advantage of them abide upon our Minds. So is it also as to his Love. The Love of *Christ* is always the same and equal unto the Church. Howbeit there are peculiar Seasons of the Manifestation of it unto the Souls of Believers. So it is when it is witnessed unto them, or shed abroad in their Hearts by the Holy Ghost. This Sense of the Love of *Christ*, and

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the Effect of it in Communion with Him, by Prayer and Praises, is divinely set forth in the Book of *Canticles*. The Church therein is represented as the *Spouse of Christ*; and as a faithful Spouse she is always either solicitous about his Love, or rejoicing in it. And when she hath attained a Sense of it, she aboundeth in Invocation, Admiration and Praise. So doth the Church of the *New Testament* upon an Apprehension of his Love, and the unspeakable Fruits of it. *Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto GOD and his Father, to Him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever, Amen, Rev. i. 5, 6.* This therefore is another Season that calls for this Duty.

(3. TIMES of Persecution for his Name's Sake, are another Season rendering this peculiar Invocation of *Christ* both comely and necessary. Two Things will befall the Minds of Believers in such a Season. *First*, Their Thoughts will be greatly exercised about Him, and conversant with Him. They cannot but continually think on Him for whom they suffer. From what He is in Himself, what He hath done for them, and what Account of all Things is to be given unto Him, continually present themselves unto their Minds. Wildernesses, Prisons and Dungeons have been filled with Thoughts of *Christ* and his Love. And many in former and latter Ages have given an Account of their holy Intercourse with the *LORD Christ* under their Restraints and Sufferings. *Secondly*, Such Persons have deep and fixed Apprehensions of the especial Concern which the *LORD Christ* hath in them as to their present Condition; as also of his Power to support them, or to work out their Deliverance. They know and consider, *That in all their Afflictions, He is afflicted, suffers in all their*

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Sufferings, is persecuted in all their Persecutions. That in them all He is full of Love, Pity, and unspeakable Compassion towards them; that his Grace is sufficient for them, that his Power shall be perfected in their Weakness, to carry them through all their Sufferings to his and their own Glory. In these Circumstances, it is impossible for them who are under the Conduct of his Spirit, not to make especial Applications continually unto Him, for those Aids of Grace, for those Pledges of Love and Mercy, for those Supplies of Consolation and spiritual Refreshments which their Condition calls for. Wherefore in this State, the *Invocation of Christ*, is the Refuge of them who truly believe in Him. So it was unto all the holy Martyrs of old, and in latter Ages. This Doctrine and Duty is not for them who are at Ease. The Afflicted, the Tempted, the Persecuted, the spiritually Disconsolate will prize it, and be found in the Practice of it. The Refreshment which they found therein, was a sufficient Ballance against the Weight of all outward Calamities, enabling them to rejoice under them with *Joy unspeakable and full of Glory.*

(4. *WHEN we have a due Apprehension of any Grace in Christ Jesus, and withal a deep Sense of our own Want of it; it is a Season of especial Application unto Him by Prayer for the Encrease of it. Nor can there be any more effectual Way to draw Supplies of Grace from Him, to draw Water from the Wells of Salvation. When in an holy Admiration of, and fervent Love unto any Grace as eminently exercised in and by Him, with a Sense of our own Want of the same Grace, we ask it of Him in Faith, He will not deny it. So the Disciples upon the Prescription of a difficult Duty unto whose due Performance a good Measure of Faith*



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was required; out of a Sense of the Fullness of Him, and their own Defect in that Grace, immediately pray unto Him, saying, *LORD increase our Faith*, Luke xvii. 5. The same is the Case with Respect to any Temptation that may befall us, wherewith He was exercised, and over which He prevailed.

(5. *THE* Time of Death whether natural, or violent for his Sake, is a Season of the same Nature. So *Stephen* recommended his departing Soul into his Hands with solemn Prayer; *LORD Jesus*, said he, *receive my Spirit*. To the same Purpose have been the Prayers of many of his faithful Martyrs in the Flames and under the Sword. In the same Manner doth the Faith of innumerable holy Souls work in the Midst of their Death-bed Groans.

AND the more we have been in the Exercise of Faith on Him in our Lives, the more ready Will it be in the Approaches of Death, to make its Resort unto Him in a peculiar Manner. And it may be other Instances of a like Nature may be given unto the same Purpose.



## CHAP. VIII.

*The Principle of assigning divine Honour to the Person of CHRIST; which is Faith in Him,*

**T**HE Principle of assigning divine Honour to *Christ* in both the Branches of it, is Faith in Him. And this hath been the Foundation of all accep-

acceptable Religion in the World since the Entrance of Sin.

1. THE first Promise, *Gen. iii. 15.* was revealed, as containing the only Means of Delivery from that Apostasy from GOD, with all the Effects of it, under which our first Parents and all their Posterity were cast by Sin. The Destruction of *Satan* and his Work, by a Saviour and Deliverer was prepared and provided for in it. This is the very Foundation of the Faith of the Church, and if it be denied, nothing of the Dispensation of GOD towards it from the Beginning can be understood. The whole Doctrine and Story of the *Old Testament* must be rejected as useless, and no Foundation be left in the Truth of GOD, for the Introduction of the *New*.

2. IT was the Person of *Christ*, his Incarnation and Mediation, that were promised under the Name of the *Seed of the Woman*, and the Work He should do in *breaking the Head of the Serpent*, with the Way whereby He should do it, *in suffering*, by his Power. The Accomplishment hereof was in GOD's sending his Son in the Likeness of sinful Flesh, in the Fullness of Time, made under the Law, or by his Manifestation in the Flesh to destroy the Works of the Devil. So is this Promise interpreted, *Gal. iii. 10. Chap. iv. 4. Heb. ii. 14, 15, 16. 1 John iii. 8.*

3. THIS Promise was confirmed, and the Way of Deliverance declared in the Institution of expiatory Sacrifices. GOD by them declared from the Beginning, that without *shedding of Blood* there was no Remission; that Atonement for Sin was to be made by Substitution and Satisfaction. With Respect unto them the LORD *Christ* was called  
the

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*the Lamb of God*, even as He took away the Sins of the World by the Sacrifice of Himself, *John* i. 29. For we were redeemed with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without Blemish and without Spot, *1 Pet.* i. 19. Wherein the holy Spirit refers unto the Institution and Nature of Sacrifices from the Beginning. And because of the Representation thereof in all the former Sacrifices, is He said to be a Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World, *Rev.* xiii. 8.

ALL expiatory Sacrifices were from the Beginning, Types and Representations of the Sacrifice of Christ, whereon all their Use, Efficacy, and Benefit among Men, all their Acceptance with God, did depend. Remove this Consideration from them, and they were as irrational a Service, as unbecoming the divine Nature, as any Thing that reasonable Creatures could fix upon.

4. OUR first Parents and all their holy Posterity did believe this Promise, as the only Way of their Deliverance from the Curse and State of Sin, and were thereon justified before God. I confess we have not infallible Assurance of any who did so in particular, but those who are mentioned by Name in Scripture, as *Abel, Enoch, Noah*, and some others. But to question it concerning others also, as of our first Parents themselves, is foolish and impious

5. THE Declaration of this Promise before the Giving of the Law with the Nature and Ends of it, as also the Use of Sacrifices whereby it was confirmed, was committed unto the ordinary Ministry of our first Parents and their godly Posterity, and the extraordinary Ministry of the Prophets which

GOD.



GOD raised up among them. For GOD spake of our Redemption by *Christ*, by the *Mouth of his holy Prophets from the Beginning of the World*, Luke i. 70. No greater Duty could be incumbent on them by the Light of Nature and the express Revelation of the Will of GOD, than that they should in their several Capacities, communicate the Knowledge of this *Promise* unto all in whom they were concerned.

6. ALL the Promises that GOD gave afterwards unto the Church under the Old Testament, before and after giving the Law, all the Covenants that He entered into with particular Persons, or the whole Congregation of Believers, were all of them Declarations and Confirmations of this first Promise, or the Way of Salvation by the Mediation of his Son, becoming the Seed of the Woman to break the Head of the Serpent, and to work out the Deliverance of Mankind. As most of these Promises were expressly concerning Him, so all of them in the Counsel of GOD were confirmed in Him, 2 Cor. i. 20. And as there are Depths in the Old Testament concerning Him which we cannot Fathom; and Things innumerable spoken of Him which we conceive not; so the principal Design of the Whole is the Declaration of Him and his Grace.

7. THOSE who voluntarily through the Contempt of GOD and divine Grace, fell off from the Knowledge and Faith of this Promise, whether at once and by Choice, or gradually through the Love of Sin, were in no better Condition than those have been, or would be, who have so fallen off, or should so Apostatize from the *Christian Religion*.

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8. FROM these Considerations, which are all of them unquestionable Principles, two Things are evident.

(1.) THAT there was no Way of the Justification and Salvation of Sinners, revealed and proposed from the Foundation of the World, but only by *Jesus Christ*, as declared in the first Promise.

(2.) THAT there was no Way for the Participation of the Benefits of that Promise, or of his Work of Mediation, but by *Faith in Him* as so promised. There was therefore Faith in Him required from the Foundation of the World; that is, from the Entrance of Sin. And how this Faith respected his Person, hath been before declared. Now Faith in Him as promised for the Works and Ends of his Mediation, and Faith in Him as actually exhibited, and as having accomplished his Work, are essentially the same, and differ only with Respect unto the Œconomy of Times which GOD disposed at his Pleasure. Hence the Efficacy of his Mediation was the same unto them who then so believed, as it is now unto us. But yet it is acknowledged, that as to the Clearness and Fulness of the Revelation of the Mystery of the Wisdom and Grace of GOD in Him, as to the Constitution of his Person in his Incarnation, and therein the Determination of the individual Person promised from the Beginning, through the actual Accomplishment of the Work which He was promised for: Faith in Him, as the Foundation of that divine Honour which it is our Duty to give unto Him, is far more evidently revealed and required in the Gospel, or under the New Testament, than it was under the Old. The Respect of Faith now, unto *Christ*, is that which renders it truly Evangelical. To believe in Him,

Him, to believe on his Name, is that especial Duty which is now required of us.

WHEREFORE the Ground of the actual Affignation of divine Honour to the Person of *Christ* in both Branches of it, *Adoration* and *Invocation*, is Faith in Him. So He said unto the blind Man whose Eyes He opened, *Believest thou on the Son of God?* John ix. 35. And he said, *LORD, I believe, and he worshipped Him,* v. 38. All divine Worship, or Adoration, is a Fruit of Faith. So also is *Invocation*; for *how should they call on Him in whom they have not believed,* Rom. x. 14. Him, in whom we believe, we ought to Adore and Invoke. For these are the principal Ways whereby divine Faith doth act itself. And so to Adore, or Invoke any, in whom we ought not to believe, is Idolatry.

THIS Faith therefore on the Person of *Christ* is our Duty. Yea such a Duty it is, that our eternal Condition doth more peculiarly depend on the Performance of it, than on any other Duty whatever. For constantly under those Terms it is prescribed unto us. *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting Life, and He that believeth not the Son shall not see Life, but the Wrath of GOD abideth on him,* John iii. 36. Wherefore the Nature and Exercise of this Faith must be inquired into.

[I.] THERE is a Faith which is exercised towards those by whom the Mind and Will of GOD is revealed. So it is said of the *Israelites*, *They believed the LORD and Moses,* Exod. xiv. 33. That is, that he was sent of GOD, that it was the Word and Will of GOD which he revealed unto them. So 1 Chron. xx. 20. *Believe in the LORD your GOD, so shall ye be established, believe his Prophets,*  
so



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*so shall ye prosper.* It was not the *Persons* of the Prophets, but their *Message* that was the Object of the Faith required. It was to believe what they said, as from GOD, not to believe in them, as if they were GOD.

BUT it is the *Person* of Christ, which is the first and principal Object of that Faith wherewith we are required to believe in Him; and so to do, is not only to assent to the Doctrine revealed by Him, but also to place our Trust and Confidence in Him, for Mercy, Relief and Protection, for Righteousness, Life and Salvation, for a blessed Resurrection and eternal Reward. This I shall (1.) manifest from some few of those multiplied Testimonies, wherein this is declared, and (2.) proceed to declare the Ground, Nature and Exercise of this Faith itself.

(1.) As to the Testimonies confirming this Truth, it must be observed of them all in general, that whenever *Faith* is required towards our LORD *Jesus Christ*, it is still called believing *in Him*, or *on his Name*, according as Faith in GOD absolutely is every where expressed. Some few may be briefly insisted on. *John* xiv. 1. *Ye believe in GOD, believe also in me.* The Distinction made between GOD and Him, limits the Name of GOD unto the Person of the Father. Faith is required in them both, and that distinctly; *ye believe in GOD, believe also in Me.* And it is the same Faith, of the same Kind, to be exercised in the same Way that is required, as is plain in the Words. They will not admit of a double Faith, of one Sort in GOD, and of another in *Christ*. Wherefore as Faith Divine is fixed on, and terminated in the Person of the Father, so is it likewise distinctly in and on the Person of the Son; and it was to evidence his di-

vine

vine Nature unto them, which is the Ground of their Faith, that He gave this Command unto his Disciples. This He farther testifies, *ver. 9, 10, 11.* And as to the Exercise of this Faith, it respected the Relief of their Souls under Troubles, Fears, and Disconsolations. *Let not your Heart be troubled,* ye believe in GOD, believe also in me. To believe in Him, unto the Relief of our Souls against Troubles, is not to assent meerly unto the Doctrine of the Gospel, but also to place our *Trust and Confidence* in Him, for *such* Supplies of Grace, for *such* an Exercise of the Acts of his divine Power, as whereby we may be supported and delivered. And we have herein the whole of what we plead. Divine Faith acted distinctly in, and terminated on the Person of *Christ*, and that with Respect unto Supplies of Grace and Mercy from Him, in a Way of divine Power. So He speaks unto *Martha*, John xi. 25, 26, 27. *He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth on me, shall never die: Believest thou this?* Whereunto she answers, *Yea, LORD, I believe that thou art Christ the Son of GOD.* His Person was the Object of her Faith, and her Belief in Him comprised a trust for all spiritual and eternal Mercies. I shall add one more, wherein not only the Thing itself, but the especial Ground of it is declared, Gal. ii. 20. *The Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of GOD, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.* That Faith He asserts which is the Spring of our spiritual Life; that Life unto GOD, which we lead in the Flesh, or whilst we are in the Body, not yet admitted unto Sight and Enjoyment. Of this Faith the Son of GOD is both the Author and the Object, the latter whereof is here principally intended. And this is evident from the Reason and Motive of it, which are expressed. This Faith I live by, am in the continual

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Exercise of, because He *loved me, and gave Himself for me.* For this is that which doth powerfully influence our Hearts to fix our Faith on Him. And that Person who so loved us, is the same in whom we believe. If his Person was the Seat of his own Love, it is the Object of our Faith. And this Faith is not only our Duty, but our Life. He that hath it not, is dead in the Sight of God.

THIS Faith in the Person of *Christ* which is the Foundation of all that divine Honour in sacred Adoration and Invocation which is assigned unto Him, may be considered two Ways. (1. As it respects his Person absolutely. (2. As He is considered in the Office of Mediation.

(1. IN the first Sense Faith is placed absolutely and ultimately on the Person of *Christ*, even as on the Person of the Father. *He counts it no Robbery* herein to be equal with the Father. And the Reason hereof is because the Divine Nature itself is the proper and immediate Object of this Faith, and all the Acts of it. This being one and the same in the Person of the Father and of the Son, as also of the Holy Spirit, two Things do follow thereon. *First*, That each Person is *equally* the Object of our Faith, because equally participant of that Nature which is the Object of it. *Secondly*, That in acting Faith on, and ascribing therewithall Divine Honour unto any one Person, the others are not excluded, yea, they are included therein. For by Reason of the mutual In-being of the Divine Persons, in the Unity of the same Nature, the Object of all spiritual Worship is undivided. Hence are those Expressions of the Scriptures; *He that hath seen the Son, hath seen the Father;*



*Father; he that honoureth the Son, honoureth the Father, for He and the Father are one.*

AND to clear our present Design, three Things may be observed from hence, namely, That the Divine Nature, with all its essential Properties, is the only Ground of divine Faith. As

1. THAT the LORD *Christ* is not the *absolute and ultimate Object* of our Faith, but under this Consideration, of his being Partaker of the Nature of GOD, and equal unto Him. Without this, to place our Faith in Him would be Robbery and Sacrilege; as is all the pretended Faith of them, who believe not his Divine Person.

2. THERE is no Derogation from the Glory of the Father, nor from the Holy Spirit, by the especial Actings of Faith on the Person of *Christ*. For all divine Honour is given solely unto the Divine Nature. And this being absolutely the same in each Person, in the honouring of one, they are all equally honoured. He that honour-eth the Son, he therein honoureth the Father also.

3. HENCE it appears what is that especial Act-  
ing of Faith on the Person of *Christ* which we intend, and which in the Scripture is given in Charge unto us, as indispensably necessary to our Salvation. And there are three Things to be consider'd in it.

(1.) THAT his divine Nature is the proper Object of this Faith, on the Consideration where-  
of alone, it is fixed on Him. If you ask a Reason why I believe on the Son of GOD; if you intend what Cause I have for it? I answer, It is

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because of what He hath done for me, so doth the Apostle, *Gal. ii. 20.* But if you intend, What is the Warrant whereon I thus believe in Him? I say, it is only this, that He is *over all GOD blessed forever*; and where He not so, I could not believe in Him. For to believe in any, is to expect from Him that to be done for me, which none but GOD can do.

(2.) THAT the entire Person of *Christ* as GOD and Man, is the immediate Object of our Faith herein. The Divine Nature is the Reason of it; but his Divine Person is the Object of it. In placing our Faith on Him, we consider Him as GOD and Man in one and the same Person. We believe in Him because He is GOD; but we believe in Him as He is GOD and Man in one Person. And this Consideration of the Person of *Christ*, namely, as He is GOD and Man, in our Acting of Faith on Him, is that which renders it peculiar, and limits it unto his Person; because He only is so; the Father is not, nor the Holy Spirit. That Faith which hath the Person of GOD and Man for its Object, is peculiarly placed on *Christ*.

(3.) THE Motives unto this distinct Acting of Faith on his Person, are always to be considered as those also which render this Faith peculiar. For the Things which *Christ* hath done for us, which are the Motives of our Faith in Him, were peculiar to Him alone. Such are all the Works of his Mediation with all the Fruits of them whereof we are made Partakers.

HENCE two Things are evident.

I.) THAT

1.) THAT Faith which we place upon the Person of *Christ*, is equally placed on the Father and the Holy Spirit, with Respect unto that Nature which is the Cause of it. But it is peculiarly fixed on *Christ*, with Respect to his Person as GOD and Man; and the Motives unto it; in the Acts and Benefits of his Mediation.

2.) ALL of *Christ* is consider'd and glorified in this acting of Faith on Him. His Divine Nature as the Cause of it, his entire Person GOD and Man, as its proper Object; and the Benefits of his Mediation as the especial Motives thereunto. This Faith in the Person of *Christ* is the Spring and Foundation of our spiritual Life. We live by the Faith of the Son of GOD. By the Actings hereof is it preserved, encreased and strengthened. *For He is our Life*, Col. ii. 4. And all Supplies of it are derived from Him by Faith in Him. We receive the Forgiveness of Sins, and an Inheritance among them that are sanctified by the Faith that is in Him, Acts xxvi. 18. Hereby do we abide in Him, without which we can do nothing, *John* xv. 5. Hereby is our Peace with GOD maintained. *For He is our Peace*, Eph. ii. 14. And in Him we have Peace according to his Promise, *John* xvi. 33. All Strength for the Mortification of Sin, for the Conquest of Temptations, all our Growth in Grace, depend on this Faith in Him.

[2.] FAITH is acted on *Christ*, as *Mediator* between GOD and Man. So it is expressed, 1 Pet. ii. 21. *Who by Him do believe in GOD that raised Him up from the Dead; and gave Him Glory, that your Faith and Hope might be in GOD.* And this Faith towards *Christ*, is not contrary to that before described; nor inconsistent with it, tho' it be distinct



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from it. To deny the Person of *Christ* to fall under this double Consideration, of a divine Person absolutely, wherein He is *over all God blessed forever*, and as *manifested in the Flesh*, exercising the Office of Mediator between God and Man, is to renounce the Gospel. And according to the Variety of these Respects, so are the Actings of Faith various; some on Him absolutely on the Motives of his Mediation; some on Him as Mediator only. And how necessary this Variety is unto the Life, Support and Comfort of Believers, they all know in some Measure who are so. Sometimes Faith considers Him *as on the Throne*; sometimes as *standing at the Right Hand of God*; sometimes as *over all God blessed forever*; sometimes as the Mediator between God and Man, the Man *Christ Jesus*. No comfortable refreshing Thoughts of God, no warrantable or acceptable Boldness in an Approach and Access to Him, can any one entertain or receive, but in this Exercise of Faith on *Christ* as the Mediator between God and Man. And if in the Practice of Religion, this Faith on God through Him, be not the Principle whereby the whole is animated and guided, *Christianity* is renounced, and the vain Cloud of natural Religion embraced in the Room of it. Not a *verbal* Mention of Him, but the real Intention of Heart to come unto God by Him is required of us; and in that all Expectation of Acceptance with God, as to our Persons or Duties is resolved.



## CHAP. IX.

### *Obedience unto CHRIST, the Nature and Causes of it.*

**A**LL holy *Obedience* both internal and external is that which we proposed as the second Part of our *religious Regard* unto the Person of *Christ*. His great Injunction unto his Disciples, is, *That they keep his Commandments*, without which, none are so.

THE *Law* under the Old Testament taken generally had two Parts. [1.] The moral preceptive Part of it. [2.] The Institutions of Worship appointed for that Season. These are jointly and distinctly called the *Law*.

[1.] IN Respect unto the first of these, the LORD *Christ* gave *no new Law*, nor was the old abrogated by Him. All is included in that Summary of it, *Thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD with all thy Heart, and thy Neighbour as thyself*. Nothing can be the Duty of Men but what is required by the *Love of GOD or our Neighbour*. Wherefore no Additions were made unto the preceptive Part of the *Law* by our Saviour, nor Counsels given by Him for the Performance of more than it did require. In this Regard the Gospel is *no new Law*, only the Duties of the moral and eternal *Law*, are plainly declared in the Doctrine of it, enforced in its Motives, and directed

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directed as to their Manner and End. Nor in this Sense did the *LORD Christ* ever declare Himself to be a *new Law-giver*; yea, He declares the contrary, that He came to confirm the Old, *Matt. v. 17.*

[2.] *THE Law* may be consider'd, as containing the Institutions of Worship, which were given in *Horeb* by *Moses*, with other Statutes and Judgments. It was in this Sense abolish'd by *Christ*. For the Things themselves were appointed, but unto the *Time of Reformation*. And thereon as the supreme *LORD* and Law-giver of the Gospel Church, He gave a *new Law of Worship*, consisting in several Institutions and Ordinances of Worship thereunto belonging.

*OBEDIENCE* unto the *LORD Christ* may be considered with Respect unto both these; the moral Law which He confirmed; and the Law of evangelical Worship which He appointed.

1.) *OBEDIENCE* unto *Christ*, doth not consist merely in *doing the Things which He requireth*. So far the Church under the Old Testament was obliged to yield Obedience unto *Moses*. All Obedience unto *Christ* proceeds from an express Subjection of our Souls and Consciences unto Him.

2.) No religious Obedience could be due unto *Christ* directly, by the Command of the moral Law, were He not *GOD by Nature* also. The Foundation of all the Obedience required therein, is, *I am the LORD thy GOD, thou shalt have no other Gods before Me.* This contains the Reason of all religious Obedience. And all religious Obedience unto any, who is not *GOD by Nature*, is Idolatry.

(3. THERE



(3. THERE is a peculiar Respect unto Him in all moral Obedience as Mediator.

(1. IN that by the supreme Authority over the Church wherewith He was vested, He hath confirmed all the Commands of the moral Law, giving them new Enforcements, whence He calls them, *His Commands*. And as the Church of *Israel* was not obliged to Obedience unto the moral Law absolutely considered, but as it was given unto them *peculiarly* in the Hand of a Mediator, that is, of *Moses*; no more is the evangelical Church, obliged by the original Authority of that Law, but as it is confirmed unto us in the Hand of our Mediator. This renders all our moral Obedience, evangelical. For there is no Duty of it, but we are obliged to perform it in Faith through *Christ*, on the Motives of the Love of GOD in Him of the Benefits of his Mediation, and the Grace we receive by Him; whatever is otherwise done by us is not acceptable unto GOD. They do therefore for the most Part deceive themselves and others who talk so loudly about *moral Duties*. If the Obligation they owe unto them, be only the original Power of the moral Law, or the Law of our Creation, and they are perform'd in the Strength of that Law unto the End of it, they are no Way accepted of GOD. But if they intend the Duties which the moral Law requireth, proceeding from, and performed by *Faith in Christ*, upon the Grounds of the Love of GOD in Him, and Grace received from Him, then are they Duties purely evangelical. And although the Law hath never lost, nor ever can lose its original Power of obliging us unto universal Obedience as we are reasonable Creatures, yet is our Obedience unto it as Christians, as Believers, immediately influenced by its Confirmation unto the

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the evangelical Church in the Hand of our Mediator. For,

(2. GOD hath given unto the *LORD Christ* all Power in his Name to require this Obedience from all that receive the Gospel. Others are left under the original Authority of the Law, either as implanted in their Natures at their first Creation, as are the *Gentiles*, or as *delivered by Moses*, and written in Tables of Stone, as it was with the *Jews*, Rom. ii. 12, 13, 14. But as to them that are called unto the Faith of the Gospel, *the Authority of Christ* doth immediately affect their Minds and Consciences.

*ALL Things* are yet more plain *with Respect unto Institutions of Divine Worship*. The Appointment of all Divine Ordinances under the New Testament, was his especial Province and Work, as the Son and LORD over his own House. And Obedience unto Him, in the Observance of them, is that which He gives in especial Charge unto all his Disciples, *Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, 20*. And it is nothing but a Loss of that Subjection of Soul and Conscience unto Him, which is indispensibly required of all Believers, that hath set the Minds of so many at Liberty to *do and observe* in divine Worship what they please, without any Regard unto his Institutions. It is otherwise with Respect unto *moral Duties*. For the Things of the moral Law, have an Obligation on our Consciences antecedent unto the Enforcement of them by the Authority of *Christ*. But as to Things of the latter Sort, our Consciences can no Way be affected with a Sense of them, but by the sole and immediate Authority of *Christ* Himself. If a Sense hereof be lost in our Minds, we shall not abide in the Observance of his Commands.

THAT

THAT which doth enliven and animate this Obedience is *Love*. This Himself makes the Foundation of all that is acceptable unto Him. *If, saith He, you love Me, keep my Commandments*, John xiv. 15. As He distinguisheth between Love and Obedience, so He asserts the former as the Foundation of the latter. He accepts of no Obedience unto his Commands that doth not proceed from Love unto his Person. That is no Love which is not fruitful in Obedience, and that is no Obedience which proceeds not from Love. So he expresseth on both Sides; *If a Man love Me, he will keep my Words; and he that loveth Me not, keepeth not my Sayings*, ver. 23, 24. In the *Old Testament* the *Love of GOD* was the Life and Substance of all Obedience. *Thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, thy Mind and Strength*, was the Sum of the Law. This includes in it all Obedience, and where it is genuine, will produce all the Fruits of it. And where it was not, no Multiplication of Duties was accepted with Him.

THAT the Person of *Christ* is the especial Object of this divine Love, which is the Fire that kindles the Sacrifice of our Obedience unto Him; this is that alone which at present I design to demonstrate.

BUT some Things are to be premised to the Confirmation of our Assertion.

1. IT is granted, that there may be a false Pretence of Love unto *Christ*. And, as this Pretence is ruinous unto the Souls of them in whom it is, so it oftentimes renders them prejudicial and troublesome unto others.

2. As



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2. As there is a false Pretence of Love unto *Christ*, so there is, or may be, a false Love unto Him also. The Persons in whom it is, may in some Measure be sincere, and yet their Love unto *Christ* may not be pure, nor sincere, such as answers the Principles and Rules of the Gospel. And, as many deceive others, so some deceive themselves in this Matter. They may think that they love *Christ*, but indeed do not so. And this I shall manifest in some few Instances.

(1.) THAT Love is not sincere which proceedeth not from, which is not a Fruit of Faith. Those who do not first really believe on *Christ*, can never sincerely love Him. It is *Faith* alone that *worketh by Love* towards *Christ* and all his Saints. If therefore any do not believe with that Faith which unites them unto *Christ*, which purifies the Heart, and is effectual in Duties of Obedience; whatever they may persuade themselves concerning Love unto *Christ*, it is but a vain Delusion.

(2.) THAT Love is not true which ariseth from false Ideas and Representations of *Christ*. Men may draw Images in their Minds of what they fancy, and then dote upon them. So some think of *Christ* only as a glorious Person exalted in Heaven, without farther Apprehensions of his Natures and Offices. Shall we think that they love *Christ*, by whom his divine Nature is denied? Or those who disbelieve the Reality of his human Nature? Or those by whom the Union of both in the same Person is rejected? There cannot be true Love unto a false *Christ*.

THESE Things being premised, we assert, that there is in all Believers, a religious Love unto the Person of *Christ*, distinct from their Obedience to his

his Commands, that is, it is distinct from all other Commands; but is also itself commanded and required of us.

THAT there is in the Church such a Love unto the Person of *Christ*, the Scripture testifies both in the Precepts it gives for it, and the Examples of it. And all those who truly believe cannot apprehend that they understand any Thing of Faith, or Love of *Christ*, or themselves, by whom it is called in question. If therefore I should enlarge on this Subject, a great Part of the Doctrine of the Scripture from first to last must be represented, and a Transcript of the Hearts of Believers wherein this Love is seated, be made. And there is no Subject that I could more willingly enlarge upon. But I must at present contract myself. Two Things only I shall demonstrate. [1.] That the Person of *Christ* is the Object of divine Love. [2.] What is the Nature of that Love in us; what are the Grounds of it, in them that believe.

THE Person of *Christ* is the principal Object of the Love of GOD, and of the whole Creation participant of his Image. The Reason why I thus extend the Assertion, will appear in the Declaration of it.

1. No small Part of the eternal Blessedness of GOD, consisteth in the mutual Love of the Father and the Son, by the Spirit. As He is the only Begotten of the Father, He is the compleat Object of the whole Love of the Father. The Father loves, and cannot but love his own Nature and essential Image in Him. He is Love eternally and necessarily in this Love of the Son; and all other Workings of Love, are but Acts of his Will, whereby somewhat of it is outwardly expressed. And all Love

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in the Creation was introduced from this Fountain, to give a Shadow and Resemblance of it.

AGAIN, He is the peculiar Object of the Love of the Father, as He is incarnate, as He hath taken on Him, and hath now discharged the Work of Mediation, or continues in the Discharge of it; that is, the *Person of Christ, as GOD-Man*, is the peculiar Object of the divine Love of the Father. So He declares Himself in the Prospect of his future Incarnation. *Behold my Servant whom I uphold, mine Eleēt in whom my Soul delighteth*, Isa. xlii. 1. And the Testimony hereof He renewed from Heaven afterwards, *Matt. iii. 17. Lo a Voice from Heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.* And our Love unto *Christ* being the only outward Expression and Representation of this Love of the Father unto Him, therein consists the principal Part of our Renovation in his Image. Wherever this is wanting, whatever there may be besides, there is nothing of the Image of GOD. He that loves not *Jesus Christ*, let him be *Anathema Maranatha*; for he is unlike GOD, his carnal Mind is Enmity against GOD.

THE clear Revelation of the Person of *Christ*, so as to render Him the direct Object of our Love, is one of the most eminent Privileges of the *New Testament*. And it is variously attested in Precepts, Promises, Instances, and solemn Approbations. Wherever He supposeth or requireth this Love in any of his Disciples, it is not only as their Duty, as that which they were obliged unto by the Precepts of the Gospel, but as that without which no other Duty whatever is accepted by Him. *If, saith He, ye love Me, keep my Commandments*, John xiv. 15. He so requires Love unto Himself, as not to expect or approve of any Obedience unto his Com-  
mands



mands without it. It is a great and blessed Duty to feed the Sheep and Lambs of Christ: Yet will not He accept of it unless it proceeds out of Love. Simon, Son of Jonas, *lovest thou Me, feed my Lambs*, John xxi. 15, 16, 17. Three Times did He repeat the same Words to him who had failed in his Love towards Him by denying Him thrice. Without this Love unto Him, He requires of none to feed his Sheep, nor will accept of what they pretend to do therein. It were a blessed Thing, if a due Apprehension hereof did always abide with them that are called unto that Work.

HEREUNTO doth He annex those blessed Promises which comprise the Whole of our Peace, Safety, and Consolation in this World. *He (saith He) that loveth Me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and manifest myself unto him*, John xiv. 21. and 23. *My Father will love Him, and we will come unto him, and make our Abode with Him*. What Heart can conceive, what Tongue can express the Glory of these Promises, or the least Part of the Grace that is contained in them? Who can conceive aright, of the divine Condescension, Love, and Graces that are expressed in them? How little a Portion is it that we know of God in these Things? But if we value them not, if we labour not for an Experience of them, according unto our Measure, we have neither Lot nor Portion in the Gospel. The Presence and Abode of God with us as a Father manifesting Himself to be such unto us, in the infallible Pledges and Assurances of our Adoption; the Presence of Christ with us, revealing Himself unto us with all those ineffable Mercies wherewith these Things are accompanied, are all contained in them. And these Promises are peculiarly given unto them that love the Person of Christ, and in the Exercise of Love towards Him.



## C H A P. X.

*The Nature, Operations, and Causes of Divine Love, as it respects the Person of*  
CHRIST.

**T**HAT we may the better understand that Love unto the Person of *Christ* which we plead for, some Things must be premised concerning the Nature of divine Love in general.

GOD hath endowed our Nature with a Faculty of fixing our *Love* upon Himself. Many can understand nothing of Love, but the Adherence of their Minds to Things visible, capable of a present natural Enjoyment. For Things unseen, especially such as are eternal and infinite, they suppose they have a Veneration; but how they should love them, they cannot understand. And the Apostle doth grant that there is a greater Difficulty in loving Things *that cannot be seen*, than in loving those which are always visibly present unto us, 1 *John* iv. 20. Howbeit this divine Love hath a more fixed Prevalency in the Minds of Men, than any other Kind of Love whatever. For,

I. THE principal End why GOD endued our Natures with that great and ruling Affection, that hath the most eminent Interest in our Souls, was that it might be fixed on Himself, that it might be the Instrument of our Adherence unto Him. At  
our

our first Creation, Love was the very Soul and quickening Principle of the Life of GOD, and on our Adherence unto Him thereby, the Continuance of our Relation unto Him, did depend. The Law, Rule and Measure of it was, *Thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD with all thy Heart, and all thy Soul.* For this End did GOD create this Affection in us. Not only our Persons in their Nature and Being, but in all their Powers and Faculties, were prepared unto this End, of living unto GOD, and coming unto the Enjoyment of Him. And all their Exercise on created Objects was to be directed unto this End. Wherefore the placing of our Love on any Thing before GOD, or above Him, is a formal Expression of our Apostasy from Him.

2. DIVINE Excellencies are a proper adequate Object of our Love. The Will indeed can adhere unto nothing in Love, but what the Understanding apprehends. But it is not necessary that the Understanding fully comprehend the whole Nature of that which the Will doth so adhere to. Where a Discovery is made by the Mind of real Goodness and Amiability, the Will can close with its Affections. And these are apprehended as absolutely perfect in the divine Nature and holy Properties of it. Whereas therefore not only that which is the proper Object of Love is in the divine Excellencies, but it is there only perfectly and absolutely, without the Mixture of any Thing that should give it an Alloy, they are the most suitable Object of our Love. There is no greater Discovery of the Depravation of our Natures, and Degeneracy of our Wills, than that whereas we are so prone to the Love of other Things, it is so hard to raise our Hearts unto the Love of GOD. Were it not for that Depravation, He would always appear as the only suitable and satisfactory Object of our Affections.



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3. THE especial Object of Love, is the divine Goodness. *How great is his Goodness, how great is his Beauty!* Zech. ix. 17. Nothing is amiable, or a proper Object of Love, but what is good, and as it is so. Hence divine Goodness, which is infinite, hath an absolutely perfect Amiableness accompanying it. Because his Goodness is inexpressible, his Beauty is so. *How great is his Goodness, How great is his Beauty!* Hence are we called to give *Thanks unto the LORD, and to rejoice in Him*, which are the Effects of Love, *because He is good*, Psal. cvi. 1. cxxxvi. 1. Neither is divine Goodness the especial Object of our Love as absolutely considered. But we have a Respect unto it, as comprehensive of all that Grace and Bounty, which give us the best Relief in our present Condition, and an eternal Reward. Infinite Goodness exerting itself in all that Grace and Bounty which are needful to our Relief and Blessedness, is the proper Object of our Love. Whereas therefore this is done only in *Christ*, there can be no true Love of the divine Goodness, but in and through Him alone. The Goodness of GOD as a Creator, Preserver, and Rewarder, was a sufficient, yea the adequate Object of all Love antecedently to the Entrance of Sin and Misery. In GOD under those Considerations might the Soul of Man find full Satisfaction as to its present and future Blessedness. But since the passing of Sin, Misery, and Death upon us, our Love can find no Amiableness in any Goodness, no Rest in any but in that Grace and Mercy by *Christ*, which we stand in Need of, for our present Recovery and future Reward. Nor doth GOD require of us that we should love Him otherwise but as He is in *Christ* reconciling the *World* unto Himself. So the Apostle fully declares it. *In this was manifest the Love of GOD towards us, because that GOD sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live through Him:*

Him: Herein is Love, not that we loved GOD, but that He loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins. And we have known and believed the Love that GOD hath to us: GOD is Love, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in GOD, and GOD in Him, 1 John iii. 9, 10.—16. GOD is Love, of a Nature infinitely good and gracious, so as to be the only Object of all divine Love. But this Love can no Way be known, or be so manifested unto us, that we may and ought to love Him, but by his Love in *Christ*, his sending of Him, and loving us in Him. Before this, without this, we do not, we cannot love GOD. For *herein is Love, not that we loved GOD, but that He loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins.* This is the Cause, the Spring and Fountain of all our Love unto Him. They are but empty Notions and Imaginations, which some speculative Persons please themselves with, about Love unto the divine Goodness absolutely considered. For however infinitely amiable it may be in itself, it is not so really unto them, it is not suited unto their State, without the Consideration of the Communications of it in *Christ*.

4. THESE Things being premised, we may consider the *especial Nature* of this divine Love, altho' I acknowledge the least Part of what Believers experience, can be expressed, at least by me. Some few Things I shall mention, which may give us a Shadow of it, but not the express Image of the Thing itself.

1.) DESIRE of Union and Enjoyment is the first vital Act of this Love. The Soul upon the Discovery of the Excellencies of GOD, earnestly desires to be united unto them, to be brought near unto that Enjoyment of them whereof it is capable, and wherein

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wherein alone it can find Rest and Satisfaction. This is essential unto all Love; it unites the Mind unto its Object, and rests not but in Enjoyment. GOD's Love unto us ariseth out of the overflowing of his own immense Goodness, whereof He will communicate the Fruits and Effects unto us. GOD is Love, and herein is Love, not that we loved GOD, but that He loved us, and sent his only begotten Son. Yet doth this Love of GOD tend to the bringing us unto Him, not that He may enjoy us, but that He be enjoyed by us. Love in general unites the Mind unto the Object, the Person loving unto the Thing or Person beloved. So it is expressed in an Instance of human Love, namely, that of *Jonathan to David, his Soul was knit to the Soul of David, and he loved him as his own Soul*, 1 Sam. xviii. 1. Love had so effectually united them, as that the Soul of *David* was as his own. Hence are those Expressions of this divine Love, by *cleaving unto GOD, following hard after Him, thirsting, panting* after Him, with the like Intimations of the most earnest Endeavours of our Nature after Union and Enjoyment. When the Soul hath a View by Faith (which nothing else can give it) of the Goodness of GOD as manifested in *Christ*, that is, of the essential Excellencies of his Nature as exerting themselves in Him, it reacheth after Him with its most earnest Embraces, and is restless until it comes unto perfect Fruition.

2.) IT is a Love of Assimilation. It contains in it a Desire and intense Endeavour to be like GOD, according to our Capacity. The Soul sees all Goodness, and consequently all that is amiable in GOD, the Want of all which it finds in itself. The Fruition of this Goodness is that which it longs for as its utmost End, and Conformity to it as the Means thereof. Love is the Principle that actually assimilates



lates and conforms us to GOD, as Faith is the Principle which originally disposeth thereunto. In our Renovation in the Image of GOD, the transforming Power is seated in Faith, but acts by Love. Love proceeding from Faith, gradually changeth the Soul into the Likeness of GOD. To labour after Conformity to GOD by outward Actions only, is to make an Image of the living GOD out of the Stock of a dead Tree. It is from this vital Principle that we are not forced into it as by Engines, but naturally grow up into the Likeness of GOD. For when it is duly affected with the Excellencies of GOD in *Christ* it excites all the Affections to a Delight in them. And where the Soul acts constantly in the Affections, it will produce Assimilation unto the Object of them. To love GOD is the only Way and Means to be like unto Him.

3.) It is a Love of Complacency, and therein of Benevolence. Upon that View which we have by Faith of divine Goodness, our Souls approve of all that is in GOD, applaud, adore, and acquiesce in it. Hence two great Duties arise, and hereon do they depend. *First*, Joyful Ascriptions of Glory and Honour unto GOD. All Praise and Thanksgiving, all Blessing unto Him, because of his Excellencies and Perfections, arise from our satisfactory Complacency in them. *The Righteous rejoice in the LORD, and give Thanks at the Remembrance of his Holiness.* Psal. xcvi. 12. They are so pleased at the Remembrance of GOD's Holiness, that it causeth them to break forth in Praises. Praise is nothing but an outward Expression of the inward Complacency of our Hearts in the divine Perfections. And, *Secondly*, Love herein acts itself by Benevolence, or the constant Inclination of the Mind to all Things, wherein the Glory of GOD is concerned. It Wills all Things wherein the Name of

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of GOD may be sanctified, his Praises made glorious, and his Will done in Earth as it is in Heaven.

4.) THIS divine Love is a Love of Friendship. The Communion which we have with GOD therein, is so intimate and accompanied with such spiritual Boldness as gives it that Denomination. So *Abraham* was called the *Friend of GOD*, Isa. lxvii. 8. Jam. ii. 23, And because of that mutual Trust which is between Friends, *the Secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him, and He will shew them his Covenant*, Psal. xxv. 14. For as our Saviour teacheth us, *Servants*, that is, those who are so, and no more, *know not what their LORD doth*; He rules them, commands them, or requires Obedience from them. But as to his Secret, his Design and Purpose, his Counsel and Love, they know nothing of it. But saith He unto his Disciples, *I have called you Friends, for all Things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you*, John xv. 15. The same Love of Friendship is expressed by that intimate Converse with, and especial Residence that is between GOD and Believers; GOD dwelleth in them, and they dwell in GOD. *If a Man, saith the LORD Christ, love Me, he will keep my Words; and my Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our Abode with him*, John xiv. 23. *And if any Man hear my Voice, and open the Door, I will come unto him, and sup with Him, and he with Me*, Rev. iii. 20. These are not an empty Sound of Words, there is Substance under them, there is Truth in them. Those whose Hearts are duly exercised in the Love of GOD, have Experience of the refreshing Approaches both of the Father and of the Son unto their Souls, in the Communications of their Love, and Pledges of their Abode with them.

THESE

THESE Things have I premised concerning the Nature of divine Love, that we may the better apprehend what we understand by it, in the Application of it to the Person of *Christ*. For,

(1. THE formal Object of this Love, is the essential Properties of the Divine Nature, its infinite Goodness in particular. Wherever these are, there is the Object and Reason of this Love. But they are all of them in the Person of the Son, no less than in the Person of the Father. As therefore we love the Father on this Account, so are we to love the Son also. But,

(2. THE Person of *Christ* is to be considered as He was incarnate, and this takes Nothing off from the Reason of this Love, but only makes an Addition to the Motives of it. This indeed for a Season veiled the Loveliness of his divine Excellencies, and so turned aside the Eyes of many from Him. For when He took on Him *the Form of a Servant, and made Himself of no Reputation*, He had unto them who looked on Him with carnal Eyes, *neither Form nor Comeliness* that He should be desired or beloved. Howbeit the entire Person of *Christ*, GOD and Man, is the Object of this divine Love, in all the Acts of it. That single Effect of infinite Wisdom and Grace in the Union of the divine and human Natures, in the Son of GOD, renders Him the Object of this Love, in a peculiar Manner. The Way whereby we may attain this peculiar Love and the Motives to it, shall close these Considerations. A due Consideration of the Person of *Christ*, is the proper Foundation of this Love. He is so proposed unto us in the Scripture that we may *believe* in Him, and *love Him*. To this End is He represented as *altogether lovely*, and the especial Glories of his Person



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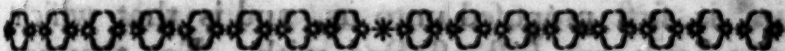
Person are delineated, yea, drawn to the Life in the holy Records of the Old and New Testaments. Therein as in a Glass do we behold the Glory of *Christ*, who is the Image of the invisible God, and have our Souls filled with transforming Affections unto Him. The whole Book of *Canticles* is nothing but a mystical Declaration of the mutual Love between *Christ* and the Church. And it is expressed by all such Ways and Means as may represent it intense, fervent, and exceeding all other Love whatever. The mutual Entercourse on this Ground of Love between *Christ* and the Church, is the Life and Soul of the whole Creation. There is more Glory under the Eye of God, in the Sighs, Groans and Mourning of poor Souls filled with the Love of *Christ*, after the Enjoyment of Him according to his Promises, in their fervent Prayers for his Manifestation of Himself unto them, in the unspeakable Joys which they have in his gracious Visits and Embraces of his Love, than in the Thrones and Diadems of all the Monarchs on the Earth. Nor will they themselves part with the ineffable Satisfaction which they have in these Things, for all that this World can do for them, or unto them. These Things have not only rendered Prisons and Dungeons more desirable unto them than the most goodly Palaces; but have made them really Places of such Refreshment, as Men seek in vain to extract out of all the Comforts this World can afford.

*O curvæ in terris animæ & cœlestium inanes !*

THIS is the Foundation of our Love unto *Christ*, namely, the Revelation of Him in the Scripture as altogether lovely. The Discovery that is made therein of the glorious Excellencies and Endowments

ments of his Person, of his Love, his Goodness and Grace, of his Worth and Work, is that which engageth the Affections of Believers to Him.

WE do not therefore in these Things *follow cunningly devised Fables*: We do not indulge our own Imaginations; they are not unaccountable Raptures which are pretended unto; nor such an artificial Concatenation of Thoughts, as some ignorant of these Things boast they can give an Account of: Our Love to *Christ* ariseth alone from the Revelation that is made of Him in the Scripture, is generated, regulated, measured, and is to be judged thereby.



## CHAP. XI.

### *Motives unto the Love of* CHRIST.

THE Motives unto this Love of *Christ*, is the last Thing on this Head that I shall speak to. When GOD required of the Church the first and highest Act of Religion, the sole Foundation of all others, namely, to *take Him as their GOD*, to own, believe and trust in Him alone as such, which is wholly due unto Him for what He is, without any other Consideration whatever; yet He thought meet to add a Motive unto the Performance of that Duty from what He had done for them, *Exod. xx. 1, 2*. The Sense of the first Command is, that we should take Him alone for our GOD; for He is so, and there is no other. But in the Prescription of this

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Duty to the Church, He minds them of the Benefits which they had received from Him, in *bringing them out of the House of Bondage*. GOD in his Wisdom and Grace ordereth all the Reasons of our Duty, so that all the rational Powers of our Souls may be exercised therein. Wherefore He doth not only propose Himself unto us, nor is *Christ* merely proposed as the proper Object of our Affections, but He calls us also to consider all those Things, that may satisfy us that it is the most reasonable and advantageous Course for us to fix our Affections on Him. And these Considerations are taken from all that He did for us, with the Reasons and Grounds why He did it. We love Him principally for what He is; but immediately for what He did. What He did for us, is first proposed unto us, and is that which our Souls are first affected with. For they are originally acted in all Things by a Sense of the Want which they have, and a Desire of the Blessedness which they have not. This directs them to what He hath done for Sinners. But that leads to the Consideration of what He is in Himself. And when our Love is fixed on Him then all those Things wherewith from a Sense of our Wants and Desires we were first affected, become Motives to confirm and encrease that Love. This is the constant Method of the Scripture; it first proposeth unto us what the LORD *Christ* hath done for us, especially in his Oblation and Intercession, with the Benefits which we receive thereby. Hereby it leads us unto his Person, and presseth the Consideration of all other Things to engage our Love to Him.

THE Motives unto the Love of *Christ* are so great, so many, so diffused through the whole Dispensation of GOD, that they can by no Hand



be fully expressed. The studying them, and Improvement of them, is among the principal Duties of our whole Lives. What I shall offer is the Reduction of them unto these two Heads: (1.) The Acts of *Christ*, which is the Substance of them: And, (2.) The Spring and Fountain of those Acts, which is the Life of them.

(1.) IN general they are all the Acts of his mediatory Office with all the Fruits of them whereof we are made Partakers. There is not any Thing that He did, or doth in the Discharge of his mediatory Office, from his Incarnation in the Womb of the blessed Virgin, to his present Intercession in Heaven, but is an effectual Motive to the Love of Him. Whatever He did or doth towards us in the Name of GOD, as the King and Prophet of the Church, whatever He did or doth with GOD for us as our High-Priest, it all speaks this Language in the Hearts of them that believe; *O love the LORD Jesus in Sincerity.* The Consideration of what *Christ* thus did and doth for us, is inseparable from that of the Benefits which we receive thereby. A due Mixture of both these, of what He did for us, and what we obtain thereby, compriseth the Substance of these Motives, *Who loved me, and gave Himself for me. Who loved us, and washed us in his own Blood, and made us Kings and Priests unto GOD. For Thou wast slain, and hast bought us unto GOD with thy Blood.* And both these are of a transcendent Nature, requiring our Love to be so also. Who is able to comprehend the Glory of the Son of GOD, in the Assumption of our Nature, in what He did and suffered therein? And for us, Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor can it enter into the Heart of Man to conceive, what we receive thereby. The least Benefit, and that obtained

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by the least Expence of Trouble or Charge, deserveth Love, and leaveth the Brand of a Crime, where it is not so entertained. What then do the greatest deserve, and those procured by the greatest Expence; even the Price of the Blood of the Son of GOD? If we have any Faith concerning these Things, it will produce Love, as that Love will Obedience. Whatever we profess concerning them, it springs from Tradition and Opinion, and not from Faith, if it engage not our Souls to the Love of Him.

HE is no Christian who lives not much in the Meditation of the Mediation of *Christ*, and the especial Acts of it. Some may more abound in that Work than others. Some may be more able than others to dispose their Thoughts concerning them, into Method and Order. Some may be more diligent than others in the Observation of Times for the solemn Performance of this Duty. Some may be able to rise to higher and clearer Apprehensions of them than others. But as for those, the Bent of whose Minds doth not lye towards them, whose Hearts are not on all Occasions retreating to the Remembrance of them who embrace not all Opportunities to call them over as they are able; on what Grounds can they be esteemed Christians? How do they live by the Faith of the Son of GOD? Are the great Things of the Gospel, of the Mediation of *Christ*, proposed unto us, as those which we may think of when we have nothing else to do, that we may meditate upon, or neglect at our Pleasure, as those wherein our Concernment is so small, that they must give Place unto all other Occasions? Nay; if our Minds are not filled with these Things; if *Christ* doth not dwell plentifully in our Hearts by Faith; if our Souls are not possessed with them,

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and in their whole inward Frame so cast into this Mould, as to be led by a natural Complacency unto a Converse with them, we are Strangers unto the Life of Faith. And if we are thus conversant about these Things, they will engage our Hearts in the Love of the Person of *Christ*. To suppose the contrary, is indeed to deny the Truth of them all, and to turn the Gospel into a Fable. Take one Instance from among the rest; namely, his Death. Hath He the Heart of a Christian, who doth not solemnly think and often meditate on the Death of his Saviour, who doth not derive his Life from it? Who can look into the Gospel and not fix on those Lines which either immediately and directly, or through some other Paths of Divine Grace and Wisdom lead him thereto? And can any have believing Thoughts concerning the Death of *Christ*, and not have his Heart affected with ardent Love to his Person? *Christ* in the Gospel is evidently set forth, crucified before us. Can any by the Eye of Faith look on this bleeding, dying Redeemer, and suppose Love unto his Person to be nothing but the Work of Fancy? They know the contrary, who always bear about in the Body, the *Dying of the LORD* Jesus; as the Apostle speaks, 2 Cor. iv. 10. As his whole Name, in all that He did, is an Ointment poured forth, for which the *Virgins* love Him, Cant. i. 3. So this precious Perfume of his Death, is that wherewith their Hearts are ravished in a peculiar Manner. Again; as there can be no Faith in *Christ*, where there is no Love unto Him, on the Account of his mediatory Acts, so where it is not, the want of it casteth Persons under the highest Guilt of Ingratitude. The highest Aggravation of the Sin of Angels, was their Ingratitude unto their Maker. For whereas they were stated in the highest Excellency, Pre-eminence and Dig-



nity, that He thought good to communicate unto any Creatures, they were unthankful for what they had so received from undeserved Goodness, and so cast themselves into everlasting Ruin. But yet the Sins of Men in their Ingratitude towards *Christ*, is attended with an Aggravation above that of the Angels. For altho' the Angels were originally instated in that Dignity, yet were they not redeemed from Misery as we are. What then will be the Condition of them, whose Hearts are not so affected with the Mediation of *Christ*, and Fruits of it, as to engage the best of their Affections to Him? The Gospel itself will be a Saviour of Death unto such ungrateful Wretches.

(2.) THAT which the Scripture principally insisteth on as the Motive of our Love to *Christ*, is his Love unto us, which was the Principle of his mediatory Actings in our Behalf. Love is that Jewel of human Nature which commands a Valuation wherever it is found. Let other Circumstances be what they will, whatever Distances between Persons may be made by them, yet real Love, where it is evidenced so to be, is not despised by any but such as degenerate into profligate Brutality. If it can produce no outward Effects advantageous to them that are beloved, yet it commands a Respect, and some Return in its own Kind. But when this Love doth also abound in Effects troublesome and chargeable in them in whom it is, and highly beneficial unto them on whom it is placed, if there be any such Affection left in the Nature of any Man, it will prevail to a reciprocal Love.

AND all these Things are found in the Love of *Christ* to that Degree, as nothing parallel can be

be found in the whole Creation. I shall briefly speak of it under two general Heads.

1.) THE sole Spring of all the mediatory Actings of *Christ*, was his own meer Love. It is true, He undertook this Work principally with Respect to the Glory of God, and out of Love unto Him. But with Respect to us, his only Motive was his abundant overflowing Love. And this is especially remember'd in that Instance wherein it carry'd Him through the greatest Difficulties, namely, in his Death and the Oblation of Himself on our Behalf, *Gal. ii. 20. Ephes. vi. 2,—25, 26. 1 John iii. 16. Rev. i. 5, 6.* This alone inclined the Son of God to undertake the glorious Work of our Redemption, and carried Him through the Death and Dread which He underwent in the Accomplishment of it. Should I engage in the Consideration of this Love of *Christ*, which was the Means of conveying all the Effects of divine Wisdom and Grace unto the Church; that Glass which God chose to represent Himself and all his Goodness in unto Believers; that Spirit of Life in the Wheel of all the Motions of the Person of *Christ* in the Redemption of the Church, unto the eternal Glory of God, his own and that of his redeemed also; that Mirror wherein the holy Angels and blessed Saints shall forever contemplate the divine Excellencies; I must now begin a Discourse much larger than that which I have passed through.

2.) THIS Love of *Christ* unto the Church, is singular in all those Qualifications which create reciprocal Affections. There can be no Love amongst Men, but will derive something from that Disorder which is in their Affections. But the Love of *Christ* is absolutely free from any Alloy.

Alloy. And it is absolutely undeserved. Nothing can be found amongst Men that can represent its Freedom from any Desert on our Part. The most candid Love amongst us, is when we love another for his Excellency and Usefulness, tho' we have no singular Benefit of them ourselves. But not the least of these Things were found in them, on whom He set his Love untill they were wrought in them, as Effects of that Love which He set upon them. Men sometimes may rise to such an high Degree in Love, as that they will even die for another. But then it must be on a superlative Esteem which they have of their Worth and Merit. It may be, saith the Apostle, treating of the Love of *Christ*, and of God in Him, *That for a good Man even one would dare to die*, Rom. v. 7. It must be for a good Man, one who is justly esteemed a publick Good to Mankind, one whose Benignity is ready to exercise Loving-kindness on all Occasions, peradventure some would even dare to die for such a Man. This is the Height of what Love among Men can rise unto. But the LORD *Jesus* placed his Love on us, that Love from whence He died for us, when we were Sinners and ungodly; that is, every Thing which might render us unamiable and undeserving. Though we were as deformed as Sin could render us, and more deeply indebted than the whole Creation could pay, yet did He fix his Love upon us, to free us from that Condition, and to render us meet for the most intimate Society with Himself. Never was there Love which had such Effects, which cost Him so dear in whom it was, and proved so advantageous unto them on whom it was placed. In the Pursuit of it He underwent every Thing that is evil in his own Person, and we receive every Thing that is good in the Favour of God, and eternal Blessedness. On the Account of these



Things, the Apostle ascribeth a *constraining Power* unto the Love of *Christ*, 2 Cor. v. 14. And if it constraineth us unto any Return to Him, it doth so to that of Love in the first Place. For no suitable Return can be made for Love but Love, at least not without it. As Love cannot be purchased, *for if a Man would give all the Substance of his House for Love, it would utterly be contemned*, Cant. viii. 7. So if a Man would give all the World for a Requital of Love, without Love, it would be despised. To fancy that all the Love of *Christ* unto us, consists in the Precepts and Promises of the Gospel, and all our Love unto Him, in the Observance of his Commands, without a real Love in Him unto our Persons, like that of a *Husband unto a Wife*, Eph. v. 25, 26. or an holy Affection in our Hearts to his Person, is to overthrow the whole Power of Religion, to despoil it of its Life and Soul, leaving nothing but the Carcass of it. This Love unto *Christ*, and unto GOD in Him, because of his Love unto us, is the principal Instance of Divine Love, the Touchstone of its Reality and Sincerity. Whatever Men may boast of their affectionate Endearments unto the Divine Goodness, if it be not founded in a Sense of this Love of *Christ* and the Love of GOD in Him, they are but empty Notions, and their deceived Hearts feed upon Ashes. It is in *Christ* alone that GOD is declared to be Love, without an Apprehension whereof, none can love Him. In Him alone, that infinite Goodness which is the peculiar Object of divine Love, is truly represented unto us. And on Him doth the saving Communication of all the Effects of it depend. And an infinite Condescension is it in the holy GOD, so to express his *Glory in the Face of Jesus Christ*, or to propose Himself as the Object of our Love in and thro' Him.

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For considering our Weakness, as to an immediate Comprehension of the infinite Excellencies of the divine Nature, or to bear the Rays of his resplendent Glory, seeing none can see *his Face and live*, it is the most adorable Effect of divine Wisdom and Grace, that we are admitted unto the Contemplation of them, in the Person of *Jesus Christ*.



## C H A P. XII.

*Conformity to CHRIST, and following his Example.*

**T**HE third Thing proposed to declare the Use of the Person of *Christ*, is that Conformity which is required of us unto Him. This is the great Design of all Believers. Every one of them hath the Idea of *Christ* in his Mind; in the Eye of Faith, as it is represented unto Him in the Glass of the Gospel. *κατοπλισόμεθα τὴν δόξαν Κυρίου*, 2 Cor. iii. 18. *We behold his Glory in a Glass*, which implants the Image of it on our Minds. And hereby the Mind is transformed into the same Image, made like unto *Christ* so represented unto us. Hence every true Believer hath an habitual Inclination and Desire to be like *Christ*. And it were easy to demonstrate that where this is not, there is neither Faith nor Love. Faith will cast the Soul into the Form of the Thing believed, *Rom. vi. 17*. And all sincere Love worketh an Assimilation. Wherefore the best Evidence of the Life of God in any Soul, of the Sincerity of Faith, Love, and Obedience, is

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an internal cordial Endeavour, operative on all Occasions, after Conformity to *Jesus Christ*.

THERE are two Parts of the Duty proposed. 1. The first respects the internal Grace and Holiness of the human Nature of *Christ*. 2. The other his Example in Duties of Obedience. And both of them belong to a true Disciple.

1. INTERNAL Conformity to his habitual Grace and Holiness, is the fundamental Design of a *Christian* Life. I shall lay down the Grounds of this Design, the Nature of it, and the Means of its Pursuit. GOD, in the human Nature of *Christ* did perfectly renew that Image of his which we lost in *Adam*, with an Addition of many glorious Endowments which *Adam* was not made Partaker of. GOD did not renew it in his Nature, as though He had ever been destitute of it, as it is with the same Nature in all other Persons. For He derived not his Nature from *Adam* in the same Way that we do; nor was He ever in *Adam* as the publick Representative of our Nature as we were. But our Nature in Him had the Image of GOD implanted in it, which was lost and separated from the same Nature, in all other Instances.

2. ONE End of GOD in filling the human Nature of *Christ* with all Grace, in implanting his glorious Image upon it, was that He might in Him propose an Example of what He would by the same Grace renew us unto. The Fulness of Grace was necessary to the human Nature of *Christ*, from its Union with the Son of GOD. For whereas therein the *Fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily*, it became an *holy Thing*, Luke i. 35. It was also necessary to Him, as to his own Obedience in the Flesh, wherein He fulfilled all Righteousness. And it was so unto  
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the Discharge of the Office He undertook: For *such an High-Priest became us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from Sinners*, Heb. vii. 26. Howbeit the infinite Wisdom of God had this farther Design in it, namely, that He might be the Pattern of the Renovation of the Image of God in us, and of the Glory that doth ensue thereon. Wherefore the Fulness of Grace was bestowed on the human Nature of *Christ*, and the Image of God gloriously implanted thereon, that it might be the Example of what the Church was through Him to be made Partaker of. That which God intends for us, in the internal Communion of his Grace, and in the Use of all the Ordinances of the Church, is, that we may come unto the *Measure of the Stature of the Fulness which is in Christ*, Ephes. iv. 13. There is a Fulness of all Grace in *Christ*. Hereunto are we to be brought according to the *Measure* that is designed unto every one of us.

3. THIS Image of God in *Christ* is represented unto us in the Gospel. Being lost from our Nature, it was utterly impossible we should have any just Comprehension of it. There could be no steady Notion of the Image of God, until it was exemplified in the human Nature of *Christ*. And thereon, without the Knowledge of Him, the wisest of Men have taken those Things to render Men most like unto God which were *adverse* unto Him. But being perfectly exemplified in *Christ*, it is now plainly represented unto us in the Gospel. Therein *with open Face we behold as in a Glass the Glory of the LORD, and are changed into the same Image*, 2 Cor. iii. 18. The Vail being taken away from divine Revelations by the Doctrine of the Gospel, and from our Hearts by the LORD the Spirit, we behold the Image of God in *Christ*, with open Face, which

which is the principal Means of our being transformed into it.

4. It is therefore evident, that the Life of God in us consists in Conformity unto *Christ*; nor is the holy Spirit as the efficient Cause of it given us for any other End, but to unite us to Him, and make us like Him. Wherefore the original Gospel - Duty which animates and rectifies all others, is a Design of Conformity to *Christ* in all the gracious Principles and Qualifications of his holy Soul, wherein the Image of God in Him doth consist. There was a Notion even among the Philosophers, that the principal Endeavour of a wise Man was *to be like unto God*. But in the Improvement of it the best of them fell into foolish and proud Imaginations. Howbeit the Notion itself, was the best Relique of our natural Perfections. And those who have not a Design to *be like unto God*, are every Way like the Devil. Wherefore it was an infinite Condescension of divine Wisdom and Grace gloriously to implant that Image of his which we are to endeavour Conformity to, on the human Nature of *Christ*, and then so fully to represent and propose it unto us in the Revelation of the Gospel. The infinite Perfections of God considered absolutely in themselves, are accompanied with such an incomprehensible Glory, that it is hard to conceive how they are the Object of our Imitation. But the Representation that is made of them in *Christ*, as the Image of the invisible God, is so suited to the renewed Faculties of our Souls, that the Mind can dwell on the Contemplation of them, and be thereby transformed into the same Image.

I SHALL briefly shew, (1.) What is required hereunto: And (2.) What is to be done for the attaining that End.

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(1.) A SPIRITUAL Light to discern the Beauty, Glory, and Amiableness, of Grace in *Christ*, is required hereunto. We can have no real Design of Conformity unto Him, unless we have their Eyes, who *saw his Glory, the Glory of the only Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth*, John i. 14. Nor is it enough that we seem to discern the Glory of his Person, unless we see a Beauty and Excellency in every Grace that is in Him. *Learn of Me*, saith He, *for I am meek and lowly in Heart*, Matt. xi. 29. If we are not able to discern an Excellency in *Meekness and Lowliness of Heart*, (Things generally despised) how shall we sincerely endeavour after Conformity to *Christ* in them? The like may be said of all other his gracious Qualifications. His Zeal, his Patience, his Self-Denial, his Readiness for the Cross, his Love to his Enemies, his Benignity to all Mankind, his Faith and Fervency in Prayer, his Love to GOD, his Compassion towards the Souls of Men, his Unweariedness in doing Good, his Purity, his universal Holiness; unless we have a spiritual Light to discern the Glory and Amiableness of them all as they were in Him, we speak in vain of any Design for Conformity to Him. And this we have not, unless GOD *shine into our Hearts*, to give us the Knowledge of his Glory, in the Face of *Jesus Christ*. It is, I say, a foolish Thing to talk of the *Imitation of Christ*, whilst we discern not that there is an Excellency in the Things wherein we ought to be like Him.

(2.) LOVE unto them so discovered, is required to the same End. No Soul can have a Design of Conformity unto *Christ*, but his, who so loves the Graces that were in Him, as to esteem a Participation of them, to be the greatest Advantage that can be in this World. It is the *Savour of his good Ointment*



Ointments for which the Virgins love Him, cleave unto Him, and endeavour to be like Him. He who admires the Glory of *Christ* as filled with these Graces, as *He was fairer than the Children of Men*, unto whom nothing is so desirable, as to have the same Mind that was in *Christ*, he is prepared to press after *Conformity* to Him. And unto such a Soul the Representation of all these Excellencies in the Person of *Christ*, is the great Incentive, Motive and Guide to all internal Obedience unto God.

WE are to labour for this Conformity,

1.) BY an Opposition to all Sin, in the Root, Principle, and most secret Springs of it. He did no Sin, neither was there any Guile found in his Mouth. *He was holy, harmless*, undefiled. He was the Lamb of God *without Spot or Blemish*. Wherefore to be freed from all Sin, is the first general Part of an Endeavour for Conformity to *Christ*. He who groaneth not in himself after it, who doth not loath every Thing of Sin, and himself for it, who doth not labour after its absolute and universal Extirpation, hath no sincere Design of Conformity to *Christ*. He who endeavours to be like Him, must *purify himself, even as He is pure*. Thoughts of the Purity of *Christ*, in his absolute Freedom from the least Tincture of Sin, will not suffer a Believer to be negligent at any Time, for the endeavouring the utter Ruin of that which makes him unlike Him. And it is a blessed Advantage to Faith in the Work of Mortification of Sin, that we have such a Pattern continually before us.

2.) THE continual Growth in every Grace, is the other general Part of this Duty. In the Exercise of his own Fulness of Grace, both in moral Duties of Obedience, and the especial Duties of his

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Office, did the Glory of *Christ* on the Earth consist. Wherefore to abound in the Exercise of every Grace, to grow in the Root, and thrive in the Fruit of them, is to be conformed to the Image of the Son of God.

ONE or two general Instances wherein He was most eminently our Example, shall close this Discourse.

(1.) HIS Meekness, Lowliness of Mind, Condescension unto all Sorts of Persons; his Love and Kindness to Mankind; his Readiness to do Good to all, with Patience and Forbearance, are continually set before us in his Example. I place them all under one Head, as proceeding all from the same Spring of divine Goodness. With respect unto them, it is required that *the same Mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus, Phil. ii. 5.* and that we *walk in Love, as he also loved us, Ephes. v. 2.* In these Things was He the great Representative of the divine Goodness to us. In the acting of these Graces on all Occasions did He manifest the Nature of God from whom He came. And this was one End of his Exhibition in the Flesh. Sin had filled the World with a Representation of the Devil and his Nature, in mutual Hatred, Strife, Variance, Envy, Wrath, Pride, Fierceness, and Rage against one another. The Instances of a contrary Frame were obscure and weak in the best of the Saints of old. But in our LORD *Jesus*, the Light of the Glory of GOD herein first shone upon the World. In the Exercise of these Graces which He most abounded in, because the Sins, Weaknesses and Infirmities of Men gave continual Occasion thereto, did He represent the divine Nature, as Love, as infinitely Good, benign, merciful, and patient, as delighting in the Exercise of these its holy Properties. In them

them was the LORD *Christ* our Example in an especial Manner. And they in vain pretend to be his Disciples, who endeavour not to order the whole Course of their Lives in Conformity to Him in these Things. One *Christian* who is meek, humble, kind, patient, and useful unto all, that condescends to the Ignorance, Weaknesses, and Infirmities of others, that passeth by Provocations, Injuries, Contempt, with Patience, and with Silence, unless where the Glory of GOD call for a just Vindication; that pitieth all Sorts of Men in their Failings and Miscarriages, who is free from Jealousies and evil Surmises, that loveth what is good in all Men, and all Men even wherein they are not good, nor do Good, doth more express the Virtues of *Christ*, than Thousands can do with the most magnificent Works of Piety or Charity where this Frame is wanting. For Men to pretend to follow the *Example of Christ*, and in the mean Time to be proud, wrathful, envious, bitterly zealous, calling for Fire from Heaven to destroy Men, or fetching it themselves from Hell, is to cry, *Hail unto Him*, and to crucify Him afresh.

(2.) SELF-DENIAL, Readiness for the Cross, with Patience in Sufferings, are the second Sort of Things which He calls all his Disciples to follow his Example in. It is the fundamental Law of his Gospel, that if any one will be his Disciple, *he must deny himself, take up his Cross and follow Him. Christ hath suffered for us, leaving us an Example, that we should follow his Steps who when He was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered, He threatned not, 1 Pet. ii. 21, 22, 23.* Hence we are called to look unto *Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who for the Joy that was set before Him, endured the Cross, and despised the Shame.* For we are to consider Him, who endured such Con-



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*tradition of Sinners in Himself, that we faint not,* Heb. xii. 2, 3. Blessed be **GOD** for this Example; for the Glory of the Condescension, Patience, Faith and Endurance of *Jesus Christ* in the Extremity of all Sorts of Sufferings. This hath been the Pole Star of the Church in all its Storms, the Guide, the Comfort, Support, and Encouragement of all those holy Souls, who in their several Generations, have in various Degrees undergone *Persecution for Righteousness Sake*, and yet continueth so to be unto them who are in the same Condition.

THE last Thing proposed concerning the Person of *Christ*, was the Use of it to Believers, in the whole of their Relation to **GOD** and Duty towards Him. And the Things belonging thereto may be reduced to these general Heads.

(1.) THEIR Sanctification, which consisteth in these four Things: 1.) The Mortification of Sin. 2.) The Renovation of our Natures. 3.) Assistances in actual Obedience. 4.) In Temptations and Trials.

(2.) THEIR Justification with its Concomitants and Consequents. As, 1.) Adoption. 2.) Peace. 3.) Consolation and Joy in Life and Death. 4.) Spiritual Gifts unto the Edification of themselves and others. 5.) A blessed Resurrection. 6.) Eternal Glory.

BUT this Argument cannot be handled as it doth deserve without an entire Discourse concerning the Life of Faith, which my present Design will not admit of.



C H A P. XIII.

*An humble Enquiry into, and Prospect of  
the Infinite Wisdom of GOD, in the Con-  
stitution of the Person of CHRIST, and  
the Way of SALVATION thereby.*

**T**HE Depths of divine Wisdom in this glorious Work are hid from the Eyes of all living. GOD alone understandeth the Way thereof; and He knoweth the Place thereof. Yet is it so glorious in its Effects, that Destruction and Death say, *We have heard the Fame of it with our Ears.* The Fame and Report of this divine Wisdom reach even unto Hell. Those who eternally perish shall hear a Fame of this Wisdom in the glorious Effects of it, towards the blessed Souls above. These Depths we may admire and adore, but we cannot comprehend: *For who hath known the Mind of the LORD herein, or with whom took he Counsel?* This alone is left unto us in the Way of Duty, that in the Effects of them, we should contemplate their Excellency, so as to give Glory to GOD, and live in an holy Admiration of his Wisdom and Grace.

SOME Things in general are to be premised to our present Enquiry.

I. WE can have no due Prospect of the Wisdom of GOD in any of his Works, much less in this of sending his Son in the Likeness of sinful Flesh, unless  
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we consider also the other holy Properties of the divine Nature. Such are his Holiness, Righteousness, Goodness, and Grace.

THERE are three Excellencies of the divine Nature principally to be considered in all the external Works of God.

(1.) HIS Goodness. This is the eternal Fountain of all divine Communications. Whatever is good to any Creature, is an Emanation from divine Goodness.

(2.) WISDOM, which is the directive Power of the divine Nature. Hereby God guides, orders, and directs all Things to his own Glory.

(3.) POWER, which is the effective Excellency of the divine Nature, accomplishing what Wisdom doth design and order.

WHEREAS Wisdom therefore is that holy Excellency of the divine Being, wherein God designs, and whereby He effects the Glory of all the other Properties of his Nature, we cannot trace the Paths of it in any Work of God, unless we know the Concernment of those other Properties in that Work. For that which Wisdom principally designs, is the Glorification of them. And unto this End almighty Power always accompanies the directive, infinite Wisdom. What infinite Goodness will communicate, that infinite Wisdom designs, contrives, and directs to the Glory of God; and what Wisdom so designs, infinite Power effects.

2. WE can have no Apprehensions of the other Properties of the divine Nature in this great Mystery of Godliness, without the Consideration of  
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that State of our own wherein they are so concerned. That which was designed unto the eternal Glory of GOD in this great Work of the Incarnation of his Son, was the Redemption of Mankind, or the Recovery and Salvation of the Church. The whole Scripture constantly assigneth this sole End of that Effect of divine Goodness and Wisdom, yea asserts it as the only Foundation of the Gospel, *John* iii. 16. Wherefore unto a due Contemplation of divine Wisdom in it, it is necessary we should consider what is the Nature of Sin, especially of that first Sin, wherein our original Apostasy from GOD did consist; what was the Condition of Mankind thereon; what is the Concernment of the holy GOD therein. What Way was suited unto our Recovery, that GOD might be glorified. Without a previous Consideration of these Things, we can have no due Conceptions of the Wisdom of GOD in this glorious Work. Wherefore I shall so far speak of them, that if it be the Will of GOD, the Minds of those who read and consider them, may be opened and prepared to give Admittance unto some Rays of that divine Wisdom, whose full Light we are not able in this World to behold.

THE first Thing we are to consider is, the Nature of our Sin and Apostasy from GOD. For from thence we must learn the Concernment of the divine Excellencies of GOD in this Work. And there are three Things that were eminent therein.

I.) A REFLECTION on the Holiness and Wisdom of GOD, in the Rejection of his Image. He had newly made Man in his own Image. And this Work He so expresseth as to intimate a peculiar Effect of divine Wisdom in it, whereby it was distinguished from all other external Works of Creation whatever, *Gen.* i. 26, 27. *And GOD said,*  
*Let*

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*Let us make Man in our own Image, after our Likeness; so GOD created Man in his own Image, in the Image of GOD created He him.* No where is there such an *Emphasis* of Expression concerning any Work of GOD. And sundry Things are represented as peculiar therein.

(1. THAT the Word of Consultation and that of Execution are distinct, in all other Works of Creation, the Word of Determination and Execution, was the same. When He created Light, which seems the Beauty and Glory of the whole Creation, He only said, *Let there be Light, and there was Light*, Gen. i. 3. So was it with all other Things. But when He comes unto the Creation of Man, another *Process* is proposed. These several Words are distinct, not in Time, but in Nature. GOD said, *Let us make Man in our Image and Likeness*; and thereon it is added distinctly, as the Execution of that antecedent Counsel: So GOD *made Man in his own Image*. This puts a signal Eminency on this Work of GOD.

(2. A DISTINCT peculiar Concernment of all the Persons of the Holy Trinity in their Consultation and Operation. *And GOD said, Let us make Man*. In this great Work divine Goodness exerted itself eminently in the *Person of the Father*; the eternal Fountain, as of the divine Nature, so of all divine Operations. Divine Wisdom acted itself peculiarly in the Person of the Son, the eternal Wisdom of the Father. Divine Power wrought effectually in the Person of the holy Spirit; who is the immediate Actor of all divide Operations.

THUS GOD made Man in his *own Image*, that is, in such a Rectitude of Nature as represented his Righteousness and Holiness, in such a State and Con-

Condition as had a Reflection on it of his Power and Rule. The former was the Substance of it, the latter a necessary Consequent.

THREE Things GOD designed in this Communication of his Image, which were his principal Ends in the Creation of all Things. And therefore was divine Wisdom more eminently exerted therein, than in all the other Works of this inferior Creation.

1.] THE first was, that He might therein make a Representation of his Holiness and Righteousness among his Creatures. This was not done in any other of them. Characters they had on them of his Goodness, Wisdom, and Power. In these Things the *Heavens declare the Glory of GOD, and the Firmament sheweth his handy Work*. His eternal Power and Godhead are manifest in the Things that are made. But none of them, not the whole Fabrick of Heaven and Earth, with all their glorious Ornaments, were able to receive any Impressions of his Holiness and Righteousness, of any of the moral Perfections of his Nature. Yet in the Demonstration and Representation of these Things doth the Glory of GOD principally consist. Wherefore He would have an Image and Representation of them in the Creation here below. And this He will always have so long as He will be worshipped by any of his Creatures.

2.] THE second was, that it might be a Means of rendering actual Glory unto Him, from all other Parts of the Creation. Without this, which is as the animating Life of the whole, the other Creatures are but as a *dead Thing*. They were as a well-tuned Instrument, which gives no Sound, unless there be a skilful Hand to move it. What is Light  
if



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if there be no Eye to see it? or what is Musick if there be no Ear to hear it? How glorious soever any of the Works of Creation appear from Impressions of divine *Power, Wisdom, and Goodness* on them, yet without this *Image of God* in Man, there was nothing here below to understand God in them, to glorify God by them. This alone is that whereby in a Way of Admiration, Obedience and Praise, we were enabled to render God the Glory which He designed from those Works of his Power.

3.] THE *third* was, that it might be a Means to bring Man unto that *eternal Enjoyment* of himself, which he was designed unto. For this was to be done in a Way of Obedience: *Do this and live*, was that Rule which the Nature of God and Man, with their mutual Relation did require. But we were made *meet* for this Obedience, and enabled unto it, only by Virtue of this *Image of God*. It was a Power to live unto God in Obedience, that we might come to the Enjoyment of Him in Glory. Evident it is, that these were the principal Ends of God in the Creation of all Things. Wherefore this Constitution of our Nature, and the Furnishment of it with the Image of God, was the most eminent Effect of infinite Wisdom in all the outward Works of the divine Nature.

2. By Apostasy from God, Man voluntarily rejected and defaced this blessed Representation of the Righteousness and Holiness of God, this great Effect of his Goodness and Wisdom, in its Tendency to his eternal Glory, and our Enjoyment of Him. No greater Dishonour could be done unto Him, than in casting Contempt on his Counsel. For as his Holiness which was represented in that Image was despoiled, so we did what lay in us to defeat the Contrivance of his Wisdom. This will

will be evident by reflecting on the Ends of it.  
For,

1.) HEREON there remained nothing in all the Creation here below, whereby any Representation might be made of GOD's Holiness and Righteousness. How could it be done, this Image being lost out of the World? The brute and inanimate Part of the Creation, however stupendiously great in its Matter, and glorious in its outward Form, was no Way capable of it. The Nature of Man under the Loss of this Image, gives rather an Image of *Satan* than of GOD. Hence instead of Goodness, Love, Righteousness, Holiness, Peace, which would have been Effects of this Image of GOD, and Representatives of his Nature, the whole World by the Nature of Man, is filled with Envy, Malice, Revenge, Cruelty, Oppression. He that would learn the divine Nature, from the Representation that is made of it, in the present Actings of the Nature of Man, will be gradually led unto the Devil instead of GOD. Wherefore no greater Indignity could be offered to divine Wisdom and Holiness, than there was in this Rejection of the Image of GOD.

2.) THERE was no Way left whereby Glory might redound to GOD, from the Remainder of the Creation here below. For the Nature of Man alone was designed to be the Means of it, by Virtue of the *Image of GOD* implanted on it. Wherefore Man by Sin did not only draw off himself from that Relation to GOD wherein he was made, but drew off the whole Creation here below with Himself into an Uselessness to his Glory. And upon the Entrance of Sin, before the Cure of our Apostasy was actually accomplished, the Generality of Mankind divided the Creatures into two Sorts; those above, or the heavenly Bodies, and those below.

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Those of the first Sort they worshipped as their Gods; and those of the *other Sort* they *abused* unto their Lusts. Wherefore GOD was every Way dishonour'd in and by them all; nor was there any Glory given Him on their Account. What some attempted to do of that Nature, in a Wisdom of their own, ended in Folly, and a renewed Dishonour of GOD.

3.) MAN hereby lost all Power of attaining that End for which He was made, namely, the eternal Enjoyment of GOD. But that which was the Malignity and Poison of this Sin, was the Contempt that was cast on the Holiness of GOD, whose Representation, and all its express Characters were utterly despised and rejected therein. Herein then lay the Concernment of the Holiness or Righteousness of GOD in this Sin of our Nature. Unless some Reparation be made for the Indignity cast upon it, unless there be some Way whereby it may be more eminently exalted in the Nature of Man, than it was debased and despised in the same Nature; it was righteous with GOD, that Mankind should perish in that Condition whereinto it was cast by Sin. It was not therefore consistent with the Glory of GOD, that Mankind should be restored, unless his Holiness be more exalted in the same Nature, than ever it were depressed or despised thereby. The Demonstration of its Glory in any other Nature, as in that of Angels, would not serve unto this End.

WE must now a little return to what we before laid down. Wisdom being the directive Power of all divine Operations, and the End of all those Operations, being the Glory of GOD Himself, or the Demonstration of the Excellencies of his Nature, it was incumbent thereon to provide for the Glory of Divine Holiness in an Exaltation an-



swerable to the Attempt for its Debasement. Without the Consideration hereof we can have no due Prospect of infinite Wisdom in this great Work of our Redemption.

3. SIN brought Disorder and Disturbance into the whole Rule and Government of GOD. It was necessary from the infinite Wisdom of GOD, that all Things should be made in perfect Order and Harmony, all in a direct Subordination to his Glory. There could have been no original Defect in the natural or moral Order of Things, but it must have proceeded from a Defect in Wisdom. For the Disposal of all Things in their proper Order, belong'd to the Contrivance thereof. And the Harmony of all Things among themselves, with all their mutual Relations, in a regular Tendency to their proper End, whereby though every individual Being hath a peculiar End of its own, yet all their Actings tend to one common End of them all, is the principal Effect of Wisdom. And thus was it at the Beginning; when GOD Himself beheld the Universe, and lo it was exceeding good. All Things being thus created, it belong'd to the Nature of GOD to be the Rector and Disposer of them all. Wherefore it concerned both the Wisdom and Righteousness of GOD to take Care that either all Things should be preserved in the State wherein they were created, and no Disorder suffered to enter into the Kingdom of GOD, or that in a Way suited to them, his Glory should be established. But Sin actually brought Disorder into the Kingdom of GOD. Hence He who looked on them in their first Constitution, affirmed them to be exceeding good, immediately on the Entrance of Sin, pronounced a Curse on the whole Earth. To suffer this Disorder to continue unrectified, was not consistent with the

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Wisdom and Righteousness of GOD. It would make the Kingdom of GOD, to be like that of *Satan*, full of Darkness and Confusion. Nothing is more necessary unto the Good of the Universe, than the Preservation of the Honour of GOD in his Government. And this could no otherwise be done, but by the Infliction of a Punishment proportionable to the Sin. Justice must be answered and complied with herein, in a Way suited unto the Glory of GOD; and to provide that in nothing it were eclipsed or diminished, was incumbent on infinite Wisdom. That must direct all Things a-new to the Glory of the Righteousness of GOD, or there is no Recovery of Mankind. And in our Enquiry after the Impressions of Divine Wisdom, on the great Means of our Restoration, this Provision made for the Righteousness of GOD in his Government of all, is greatly to be attended unto.

4. MAN by Sin put Himself into the Power of the Devil, GOD's greatest Adversary. The Devil had newly by Apostacy from his first Condition, cast Himself under the eternal Displeasure of GOD. GOD had righteously purposed in Himself, not to contrive any Way for his Deliverance. He on the other Side was become obdurate in his Malice and Hatred of GOD, designing his Dishonour with the utmost of his remaining Abilities. In this State of Things, Man voluntarily leaves the Rule of GOD, and puts Himself into the Power of the Devil. Herein did GOD's Adversary seem for a Season to triumph, as if he had defeated the Design of his Goodness, Wisdom and Power. So He would have continued to do, if no Way had been provided for his Disappointment. This therefore belong'd to the Divine Wisdom, namely, that the Glory of GOD should not

not suffer any Diminution hereby. All this, and inconceivably more, being contained in the Sin of our Apostacy from GOD; it must needs follow, that the Condition of all Mankind became thereby inexpressibly evil. As we had done all the moral Evil which our Nature was able to act, so it was meet we should receive all the penal Evil which our Nature was able to undergo. And it all issued in Death temporal and eternal inflicted from the Wrath of GOD. This is the first Thing to be consider'd in the Footsteps of Divine Wisdom in our Deliverance by the Incarnation of the Son of GOD. Without due Conceptions of the Nature of this Sin and Apostacy, of the Provocation given unto GOD thereby, of the Injury attempted to be done unto all his Properties, of his Concernment in their Reparation, with the unspeakable Misery that Mankind was fallen into, we cannot have the least View of the glorious Actings of Divine Wisdom in our Deliverance by *Christ*.

Now it was impossible that Man, thus deeply fallen, should restore or recover Himself. Wherefore we must in the next Place enquire what is necessary unto such a Restoration, on the Account of that Concernment of the divine Excellencies in the Sin and Apostacy of Man, which we have stated before. For hereby we may obtain an Insight into the Glory of that Wisdom whereby it was contrived and effected. And the Things following, among others, may be observed.

1.) IT was required that there should be an Obedience yielded unto GOD, bringing more Glory unto Him, than Dishonour did accrue from the Disobedience of Man. The original Law of Personal Righteousness was not given primarily



that Men might suffer for its Transgression, but that GOD might be glorified in its Accomplishment. If this be not done, it is impossible that Men should be restored unto the Glory of GOD. If the Law be not fulfilled by Obedience, Man must suffer evermore for his Disobedience, or GOD must lose the Manifestation of his Holiness therein. Besides, GOD had represented his Holiness in that Image of it, which was implanted on our Nature, and which was the Principle enabling us unto Obedience. This also was rejected by Sin, and therein the Holiness of GOD despised. If this be not restored in our Nature, and that with Advantages above what it had in its first Communication, we cannot be recovered unto the Glory of GOD.

2.) It was necessary that the Disorder brought into the Rule and Government of GOD by Sin should be rectified. This could no otherwise be done but by the Infliction of that Punishment, which in the unalterable Rule of divine Justice was due thereto. The Dismission of Sin on any other Terms, would leave the Rule of GOD under unspeakable Dishonour. For where is the Righteousness of Government, if the highest Sin that our Nature was capable of, and which brought Confusion on the whole Creation below, should forever go unpunished? The first express Intimation that GOD gave of his Righteousness in the Government of Mankind, was his threatening a Punishment equal to the Demerit of Disobedience, if Man should fall into it. *In the Day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die.* If He revoke and disannul this Sentence, how shall the Glory of his Righteousness in the Rule of all be made known? But how this Punishment should be undergone,

dergone, which consisted in Man's eternal Ruin, and yet Man be eternally saved, was a Work for divine Wisdom to contrive. This therefore was necessary to the Honour of God's Righteousness, as He is the supreme Governor and Judge of all the Earth.

3.) It was necessary that *Satan* should be despoiled of his Advantage and Power over Mankind unto the Glory of God. For he was not to be left to triumph in his Success. And inasmuch as Man was on his Part rightfully given up to him, his Deliverance was not to be wrought by an Act of absolute Dominion, but in a Way of Justice and lawful Judgment. Without these Things the Recovery of Mankind to the Enjoyment of God was utterly impossible on the Account of the Concernment of his divine Perfections in our Apostacy.

How all this might be effected; how the Glory of the Holiness and Righteousness of God in his Law and Rule, and in the primitive Constitution of our Nature might be repaired; how his Goodness might be manifested and exalted in the Reparation of Mankind, was left to the Contrivance of infinite Wisdom. From the eternal Springs thereof must this Work arise, or cease forever. To trace some of the Footsteps of divine Wisdom herein, from the Revelation of it by its Effects, is that which lieth before us. And sundry Things appear to have been necessary hereunto. As,

I. THAT all the Things required unto our Restoration must be wrought in our own Nature, in the Nature that had sinned, and which was to be restored. On Supposition I say, of the Salvation of our Nature, no Satisfaction can be made  
unto

unto the Glory of GOD for the Sin of that Nature, but in the Nature itself that sinned. For whereas GOD gave the Law unto Man as an Effect of his Wisdom and Holiness, which he transgressed in his Disobedience, wherein could the Glory of them be exalted if the same Law were fulfilled by a Nature of another Kind, suppose that of Angels? For notwithstanding any such Obedience, yet the Law might be unsuited unto the Nature of Man. Wherefore there would be a Vail drawn over the Glory of GOD, in giving the Law unto Man, if it were not fulfilled in the same Nature. Nor can there be any such Relation between the Obedience and Sufferings of one Nature, in the Stead and for the Disobedience of another, as that Glory might ensue unto the Wisdom, Holiness and Justice of GOD, in the Deliverance of that other Nature thereon. What then was required unto our Deliverance? Why saith he, *Forasmuch as the Children were Partakers of Flesh and Blood, He Himself took Part of the same*, ver. 14. It was human Nature (here expressed by *Flesh and Blood*) that was to be delivered, and therefore it was human Nature wherein this Deliverance was to be wrought. No otherwise could our Ruin be retrieved, nor our Deliverance from Sin effected which came by Man, but by Man, by one of the same Nature with us. This therefore in the first Place became the Wisdom of GOD, that the Work of Deliverance should be wrought in our own Nature, in the Nature that had sinned.

2. THAT Part of human Nature, whereby this Work was to be effected was to be derived from the common Root of the same Nature, in our first Parents. It would not suffice, that GOD should create a Man out of the *Dust of the Earth*. For there



there would be no Alliance between Him and us, so as that we should be any Way concerned in what He did or suffered. Hence it is that the Genealogy of *Christ* is given us in the Gospel, not only from *Abraham*, to declare the Faithfulness of GOD in the Promise that he should be of his Seed, but from *Adam* also, to manifest his Relation to the common Stock of our Nature, and to all Mankind therein. The first Discovery of the Wisdom of GOD herein, was in that primitive Revelation, that the Deliverer should be of *the Seed of the Woman*, Gen. iii. 15. No other but He who was so, could *break the Serpent's Head*, or *destroy the Work of the Devil*, so as that we might be delivered and restored. He was not only to be Partaker of our Nature, but He was so to be, by being *the Seed of the Woman*, Gal. iv. 4. He was not to be created out of Nothing, nor to be made of the Dust of the Earth, but so made of a Woman, as that thereby He might receive our Nature from the common Root of it. Thus He *who sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one*, Heb. ii. 11. ἑξ ἑνός, that is, *ἐκ μιᾶς*, of the *same Mass, of one Nature and Blood*; whence He is not ashamed to call them Brethren. This also was to be brought forth from the Treasures of infinite Wisdom.

3. THIS Nature of ours, wherein the Work of our Recovery is to be wrought, was not to be so derived from the original Stock of our Kind, as to bring with it the same Taint of Sin, and the same Guilt, as accompany'd every other. For as the Apostle speaks, *such an High-Priest became us*, (and as an High-Priest was He to accomplish this Work) *as was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners*. For if this Nature in Him were defiled, if it were under a Deprivation of the

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the Image of GOD, it could do nothing that should be acceptable unto Him. And if it were subject to Guilt on its own Account, it could make no Satisfaction for the Sin of others. Here therefore again occurs a Difficulty which nothing but Divine Wisdom could expedite.

To take a little farther View hereof, we must consider on what Grounds these Things (spiritual Defilement and Guilt) adhere to our Nature as they are in all our Persons. And the first of these is, that our entire Nature was in *Adam* as our Head and Representative. Hence his Sin became the Sin of us all. *In him we all sinned*; all did so who were in him as their common Representative when he sinned. Hereby we became liable to the Wrath of GOD for the common Sin of our Nature. And the other is, that we derive our Nature from *Adam* by the Way of natural Generation. By that Means alone is the Nature of our first Parents as defiled communicated to us. For by this Means do we appertain unto the Stock, as it was degenerate and corrupt. Wherefore that Part of our Nature whereby this great Work was to be wrought, must as unto its Substance be derived from our first Parents, yet so as never to have been in *Adam* as a common Representative; nor be derived from him by natural Generation. The bringing forth of our Nature in such an Instance, wherein it should relate no less really to the first *Adam* than we do ourselves, whereby there is the strictest Alliance of Nature between him and us, yet so, as not in the least to participate of the Guilt of the first Sin, nor of the Defilement of our Nature thereby, must be an Effect of infinite Wisdom. And this, as we know, was done in the Person of *Christ*. For his human Nature was never in *Adam* as his Representative.

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For He derived it only from and after the first Promise, when *Adam* ceased to be a common Person. Nor did it proceed from him by natural Generation, the only Means of the Derivation of its Depravation. For it was an holy Thing created in the Womb of the Virgin by the Power of the Most-High. *O the Depths of the Wisdom and Knowledge of GOD!*

It was necessary therefore on all these Considerations, that He by whom the Work of our Recovery was to be wrought, should be a Man, Partaker of the Nature that sinned, yet free from all Sin. And this did Divine Wisdom contrive and accomplish in the human Nature of *Jesus Christ*.

BUT yet in the second Place on all the Considerations before mentioned, it is no less evident, that this Work could not be wrought by him, who was no more than a meer Man, and who had no Nature but ours. There was no one Act which He was to perform in order to our Deliverance, but did require a Divine Power. Herein lies that great Mystery of Godliness, whereunto a continual Opposition hath been made by the Gates of Hell. But whereas it belongs unto the Foundation of our Faith, we must confirm the Truth of it. And three Things are to be spoken to.

FIRST, We are to give in rational Evidences, that the Recovery of Mankind was not to be effected, by any one who was a meer Man, and no more; He must be GOD also.

SECONDLY, We must enquire into the Suitableness to Divine Wisdom, in the Redemption of the Church by *Jesus Christ*, who was GOD and Man in one Person. And thereon give a Description



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scription of the Person of *Christ*, which suiteth all the Ends of infinite Wisdom. The first of these falls under sundry plain Demonstrations.

1.) THAT human Nature might be restored, or any Portion of Mankind eternally saved, it was necessary, that an Obedience should be yielded to GOD, which should bring more Glory unto his Holiness, than there was Dishonour reflected on it, by the Disobedience of us all. But such an Obedience could never be yielded to GOD by any meer Creature whatever. He who undertaketh this Work must have somewhat that is divine and infinite to put an infinite Value on his Obedience; that is, He must be GOD.

2.) THE Obedience of a meer Man, could have no Influence at all on the Recovery of Mankind. For whatever it were, it would be all due from Him for Himself, and so could only profit Himself. There is no meer Creature, but is obliged for himself unto all the Obedience to GOD, that he is capable of. Yea, universal Obedience in all possible Instances is so absolutely necessary to him, that the voluntary Omission of it in any one Instance, would be ruinous to his own Soul. Wherefore no such Obedience could be accepted as any Kind of Compensation for the Disobedience of others. He then that performs this Obedience, must be one who was not originally oblig'd thereto on his own Account. And this must be a divine Person and none other; for every meer Creature is so obliged.

3.) THE People to be redeemed, and brought unto Glory, were great and innumerable; *a great Multitude which no Man can number*, Rev. vii. 9. The Sins which they were to be ransomed and justified

justified from, were next unto absolutely infinite. They wholly surpass the Comprehension of any created Understanding. And in every one of them there was something infinite, as committed against an infinite Majesty. The Miseries which hereon all these Persons were obnoxious unto, were infinite, because eternal; or all that Evil which our Nature is capable to suffer, was by them all eternally to be undergone. By all these Persons, in all these Sins, there was an Inroad made on the Rule and Government of GOD, an Affront given to his Justice in the Violation of his Law. Nor can any of them be delivered from the Consequents hereof, without a Satisfaction made to the Justice of GOD. To assert the contrary, is to suppose that it is all one to Him whether He be obeyed or disobeyed by his Creatures. And this is all one as to deny his very Being; seeing it opposeth the Glory of his essential Properties. But on the other Hand, whoever doth truly and sincerely believe the divine Person of *Christ*, namely, that He was GOD and Man in one Person, and as such acted in the whole Work of Mediation, cannot shut his Eyes against the glorious Light of this Truth, that what He did and suffer'd, must have an intrinsick Worth, outballancing all the Evil in the Sins of Mankind; that more Honour and Glory accrued unto GOD by his Obedience, than Dishonour by the Disobedience of *Adam* and all his Posterity.

4.) If a Man be recovered, He must be restored into the same State, wherein he was placed before the Fall. To restore him with any Diminution of Honour and Blessedness, was not suited unto Divine Wisdom and Bounty. Yea, seeing it was the infinite Goodness and Mercy of GOD to restore him, it seems agreeable to the di-

vine Excellencies, that he should be brought into a better Condition than that which he had lost. But before the Fall Man was not subject unto any but unto GOD alone. But if he were redeemed by one who was a meer Creature, he could not be restored unto this State and Dignity. For on all Grounds of Right and Equity, he must owe all Service and Obedience to Him by whom he was redeem'd. For when we are *bought with a Price, we are not our own*, as the Apostle affirms, 1 Cor. ix. 19, 20. We are *therefore his who hath bought us*, and Him are we bound to serve in our Souls and Bodies which are his. Accordingly in the Purchase of us, the LORD *Christ* became our absolute LORD. It would follow therefore, that if we were redeemed by a meer Creature, into the Service of a meer Creature, we should be recovered. And so they believe who affirm the LORD *Christ* to be a Man and no more. But on this Supposition we are so far from an Advancement in State by our Restoration, that we do not recover what we were first instated in. For it belong'd thereunto, that we should owe religious Service and Obedience unto Him alone who was GOD over all blessed forever. And they bring all Confusion into Christian Religion, who make a meer Creature the Object of our Faith, Love, Adoration, Invocation and all sacred Worship. But in our present Restoration, we are made subject anew as to religious Service to GOD alone. Therefore the Holy Angels, the Head of the Creation, openly disclaim any such Veneration from us, because they are only the Fellow-Servants of them that have the Testimony of *Jesus*. Nor hath GOD put the World to come, the Gospel State of the Church into Subjection unto Angels, or any Creature, but only unto the Son, who is

LORD



LORD over his own House, even He that made all Things, who is GOD, *Heb. iii. 4, 5, 6.*

ON these Suppositions which are full of Light and Evidence, infinite Wisdom did interpose, to glorify all the other Excellencies of GOD, in such a Way as might solve all Difficulties, and satisfy all the Ends of GOD's Glory, in the Redemption of Mankind.

MAN by Sin had cast the most inconceivable Dishonour on the Righteousness, Holiness, Goodness and Rule of GOD, and Himself into the Guilt of eternal Ruin. In this State it became the Wisdom and Goodness of GOD, neither to suffer the whole Race of Mankind to come short eternally of that Enjoyment of Himself for which it was created, nor yet to deliver any one of them, without retrieving the Honour of his Righteousness, Holiness and Rule from the Diminution that was made of it by Sin. As this could no Way be done, but by a full Satisfaction to Justice, and an Obedience to the Law, yielding more Honour to the Holiness and Righteousness of GOD, than they could lose by the Sin and Disobedience of Man; so this Satisfaction must be made, and this Obedience be yielded by the same Nature that sinned, whereby alone the Residue of Mankind may be interested in the Benefits of that Obedience, and Satisfaction. Yet was it necessary hereto, that the Nature wherein all this was to be performed, though derived from the same common Stock with that whereof we are Partakers, should be absolutely free from the Contagion and Guilt which with it are communicated to us from the common Stock. Unless it were so there could be no Undertaking in it for others, it would not be able to answer for itself. But yet on all these Suppositions,

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LORD

LORD over his own House, even He that made all Things, who is GOD, *Heb. iii. 4, 5, 6.*

ON these Suppositions which are full of Light and Evidence, infinite Wisdom did interpose, to glorify all the other Excellencies of GOD, in such a Way as might solve all Difficulties, and satisfy all the Ends of GOD's Glory, in the Redemption of Mankind.

MAN by Sin had cast the most inconceivable Dishonour on the Righteousness, Holiness, Goodness and Rule of GOD, and Himself into the Guilt of eternal Ruin. In this State it became the Wisdom and Goodness of GOD, neither to suffer the whole Race of Mankind to come short eternally of that Enjoyment of Himself for which it was created, nor yet to deliver any one of them, without retrieving the Honour of his Righteousness, Holiness and Rule from the Diminution that was made of it by Sin. As this could no Way be done, but by a full Satisfaction to Justice, and an Obedience to the Law, yielding more Honour to the Holiness and Righteousness of GOD, than they could lose by the Sin and Disobedience of Man; so this Satisfaction must be made, and this Obedience be yielded by the same Nature that sinned, whereby alone the Residue of Mankind may be interested in the Benefits of that Obedience, and Satisfaction. Yet was it necessary hereto, that the Nature wherein all this was to be performed, though derived from the same common Stock with that whereof we are Partakers, should be absolutely free from the Contagion and Guilt which with it are communicated to us from the common Stock. Unless it were so there could be no Undertaking in it for others, it would not be able to answer for itself. But yet on all these Sup-

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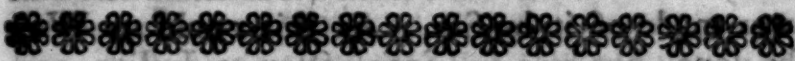
positions,



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positions, no human Nature could possibly yield that Obedience to God, or make that Satisfaction for Sin, whereon the Deliverance of others might ensue, to the Glory of the Holiness, Righteousness and Rule of God.

IN this State of Things did infinite Wisdom interpose, in that glorious Contrivance of the Person of *Christ*, or the Divine Nature, the eternal Son of God, and of ours in the same individual Person. Otherwise this Work could not be accomplish'd; at least all other Ways are hidden from the Eyes of all living, no created Understanding being able to apprehend any other Way whereby it might so have been unto the eternal Glory of God. This therefore is such an Effect of Divine Wisdom, as will be the Object of holy Adoration to Eternity.



### C H A P. XIV.

*The Exaltation of CHRIST; with his present State in Glory, during the Continuation of his mediatory Office.*

THE Apostle describing the great Mystery of Godliness, God *manifest in the Flesh*; by several Degrees of Ascent, he carrieth it within the Vail, and leaves it there in Glory, 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. God was manifest in the Flesh, and *received up into Glory*. This Assumption of our Lord *Jesus Christ* into Glory, is a principal Article

ticle of the Faith of the Church. This also we must therefore consider in our Meditations on the Person of *Christ*.

THAT which I especially intend, is his present State in Heaven, in the Discharge of his mediatory Office before the Consummation of all Things. Hereon doth the Glory of GOD and the especial Concernment of the Church at present depend. For at the End of this Dispensation He shall give up the Kingdom unto GOD, even the Father, or cease from the Administration of his mediatory Office and Power.

ALL Things fell by Sin into an Enmity to GOD. The Removal of this Enmity, and the Destruction of all Enemies, is the Work that GOD committed to his Son, in his Incarnation and Mediation, *Eph. i. 10*. This He was variously to accomplish in the Administration of all his Offices. The Enmity between GOD and us immediately, He removed by the *Blood of his Cross*, whereby He made *Peace*, *Eph. ii. 14, 15, 16*. Which Peace He continues and preserves by Intercession, *Heb. vii. 26. 1 John ii. 2*. The Enemies themselves of the Church's eternal Welfare, namely, Sin, Death, the World, *Satan* and Hell, He subdues by his Power. In the gradual Accomplishment of this Work; according as the Church is brought forth in successive Generations, He is to continue unto the Consummation of all Things. Untill then, the whole Church will not be saved, and therefore his Work will not be finished. He will not cease his Work, whilst there is one of his Elect to be saved, or one Enemy to be subdued. He shall not faint nor give over untill He hath sent forth *Judgment unto Victory*.

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FOR the Discharge of this Work, He hath a sovereign Power over all Things in Heaven and Earth committed unto Him. And so absolutely is it vested in Him, that upon the ceasing of the Exercise of it, *He Himself* is said to be made *subject unto GOD*. It is true, that the *LORD Christ* in his human Nature is always less than, or inferior to *GOD*, even the Father. In that Sense He is in Subjection unto Him now in Heaven. But yet He hath an actual Exercise of divine Power, wherein He is absolute and supreme. When this ceaseth, He shall be *subject unto the Father* in that Nature, and *only so*. Wherefore when this Work is perfectly fulfilled, then shall all the mediatory Actings of *Christ* cease for evermore. For *GOD* will then have compleatly finished the whole Design of his Wisdom and Grace, in the Constitution of his Person and Offices, and have raised up and finished the whole Fabrick of eternal Glory. Then will *GOD be all in all*. In his own immense Nature and Blessedness He shall not only be *all essentially* and casually, but *in all* also; He shall *immediately be all in and unto us*.

THIS State of Things, when *GOD* shall *immediately be all in all*, we can have no just Comprehension of in this Life. Some refreshing Notions of it may be framed from those Apprehensions of the divine Perfections which Reason can attain to; and their Suitableness to yield eternal Blessedness in that Enjoyment of them, whereof our Nature is capable. Howbeit of these Things in particular, the Scripture is silent; however it testifies our eternal Reward to consist in the Enjoyment of *GOD*.

THE Consideration of the present State of *Christ* in Heaven, may be reduced unto three Heads.

I. THE



1. THE Glorification of his human Nature.
2. His mediatory Exaltation; or the especial Glory of his Person as Mediator.

3. THE Discharge of his Office in this State of Things; which is what at present I shall principally enquire into.

AND, (I.) There is that wherein the Glory of the human Nature of *Christ*, differeth from that which any of the Saints are Partakers of. And this is;

1.) THE eternal Subsistence of that Nature of his, in the Person of the Son of GOD. As this belongs unto its Dignity and Honour, so it doth also unto its inherent Glory. This is and shall be eternally peculiar unto Him, in Distinction from, and Exaltation above the whole Creation of GOD, Angels and Men. This is that wherein the Glory of the human Nature of *Christ*, doth essentially differ from that of any other Creature whatever. And hereon other Things depend. For,

2.) HENCE the Union of the human Nature of *Christ* to GOD, and the Communications of GOD unto it, are of another Kind, than those of the blessed Saints.

IN this World Believers are united unto GOD by Faith. It is by Faith that they cleave unto Him with Purpose of Heart. In Heaven it shall be by Love. Ardent Love with Delight, Complacency, and Joy, from a clear Apprehension of GOD's infinite Goodness and Beauty now made present unto us, now enjoyed by us, shall be the Principle of our eternal Adherence unto Him and Union with Him.

Him. His Communications unto us here, are by an external Efficiency of Power. He communicates of Himself unto us in the Effects of his Goodness, Grace, and Mercy, by the Operations of his Spirit in us. Of the same Kind will all the Communications of the divine Nature be unto us unto all Eternity. It will be by what He worketh in us by his Spirit and Power. There is no other Way of the Emanation of Virtue from GOD unto any Creature. But these Things in *Christ* are of another Nature. This Union of his human Nature unto GOD, is immediate in the Person. But the Way of the Communications of divine Nature unto the human in his Person, is what we cannot comprehend. There is nothing equal to it, nothing like it in all the Works of GOD. As it is a Creature it must subsist in eternal Dependence on GOD; neither hath it any Thing but what it receives from Him. For this belongs essentially unto the divine Nature, to be the eternal Spring of all Being and Goodness. Nor can Omnipotency itself exalt a Creature into any such Condition, that it should not always and in all Things depend absolutely on the divine Being. But as to the Way of the Communications between the divine and human Nature in the personal Union, we know it not.

3.) HENCE the human Nature of *Christ*, in his divine Person, and together with it, is the Object of divine Adoration and Worship, *Rev. v. 13.* All Creatures whatever do for ever ascribe *Blessing, Honour, Glory, and Power, unto the Lamb*, in the same Manner as unto Him who sits on the Throne. But no other Creature either is, or can be exalted into such a Condition of Glory, as to the Object of any divine Worship, from the meanest Creature, which is capable of the Performance of it.

4.) THE Glory that GOD designed to accomplish in and by Him, is now made evident unto all the holy Ones that are about the Throne. The great Design of the Wisdom and Grace of GOD from Eternity, was to manifest all the holy Properties of his Nature, in and by *Jesus Christ*. And this is that wherein He will acquiesce, with which He is well pleased.

IN Heaven this is conspicuously and gloriously manifest unto all the blessed Ones that are before the Throne of GOD. They do not behold it by Faith in various Degrees of Light, as we do here below. But they behold openly and plainly the whole Glory of GOD, all the Characters of it, illustriously manifesting themselves in Him, in what He is, in what He hath done, in what He doth. Divine Wisdom, Grace, Goodness, Love, Power, all shine forth in Him unto the Contemplation of all his Saints, in whom He is admired. And in the Vision hereof consists no small Part of our eternal Blessedness.

(2.) THE Glory of the human Nature of *Christ* differs from that of the Saints after the Resurrection, in Things which concern the Degrees of it, For,

1.) THE Glory of his Body is the Pattern they shall be conformed unto, *Phil. iii. 21. Who shall change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious Body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all Things unto Himself.* Our Bodies were made vile by the Entrance of Sin. Thence they became Brothers to the Worms, and Sisters unto Corruption. To Death and the Grave with Rottenness and Corruption therein, they are designed. At the Resurrection they



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they shall be new fashioned and moulded. Not only all the Disadvantage they received by the Entrance of Sin shall be removed, but many Additions of glorious Qualifications which they had not in their primitive Constitution shall be added to them. And this shall be done by the *almighty Power of Christ*; whereby He is able to subdue all Things unto Himself. But of this State whereinto we shall be changed by the Power of *Christ*, his own Body is a Pattern and Example. A Similitude of it is all that we shall attain. And that which is the Exemplar in any State, is the Rule and Standard unto all others. Such is the Glory of *Christ*; ours consists in Conformity thereto; which gives Him the Pre-eminence.

2.) As the State of his Body is more glorious than ours shall be, so will that of his Soul appear to be more excellent than what we are capable of. For that Fullness of the Spirit without Measure, and of all Grace which his Nature was capacitated for by Virtue of the hypostatical Union, doth shine forth in all Excellency and Glory. The Grace that was in *Christ* in this World, is the same with that which is in Him now in Heaven. The Nature of it was not changed, but is only brought into a more glorious Exercise. And all his Graces are now made manifest, the Vail being taken from them, and Light communicated to discern them. And altho' the Grace which is in Believers, be of the same Nature with that which is in *Christ Jesus*, and shall be changed into Glory, after the Likeness of his, yet is it, and always shall be incomprehensibly short of what dwells in Him. And herein also doth his Glory excel that of all other Creatures whatever.

But

BUT we must draw a Vail over what remains. For it doth not yet appear what we ourselves shall be. Much less is it evident what are, and what will be the Glories of the Head above all the Members; even then when we shall be made like unto Him.

2. THE second Thing to be considered in the present State of *Christ*, is his mediatory Exaltation. And two Things with Respect thereunto may be enquired into. (1. The Way of his Entrance into that State above. 2.) The State itself with the Glory of it.

1.) THE Way of the Entrance into the Exercise of his mediatory Office in Heaven is expressed, 1 Tim. iii. 16. *He was received into Glory*. And He entered into Glory, Luke xxiv. 26. This Assumption and Entrance into Glory was upon his Ascension described, Acts i. 9,—11. He was taken up into Heaven, by an Act of divine Power; and He went into Heaven, in his own Choice and Will, as that which He was exalted to. And this Ascension of *Christ* in his human Nature into Heaven is a fundamental Article of the Faith of the Church.

IT falls under a double Consideration.

[1.] IT was triumphant, as He was a King.

[2.] IT was gracious, as He was a Priest. His Ascension as to Change of Place, from Earth to Heaven, and as to the outward Manner of it, was one End and the same, and at once accomplished. But as to the End of it, which is the Exercise of all his Offices, it had various Respects, various Prefigurations, and is distinctly proposed unto us.

[1.] IN

[1.] In his Ascension as it was triumphant, three Things may be considered.

1.] THE Manner of it, it was openly triumphant and glorious. So is it described, *Ephes. iv. 8.* He ascended up on high; He lead Captivity captive, and gave Gifts unto Men. And Respect is had unto the Prefiguration of it, at the Giving of the Law, *Psal. lxxviii. 17, 18.* where the Glory of it is more fully expressed. *The Chariots of GOD are twenty Thousand, even Thousands of Angels; the LORD is among them as in Sinai, in the holy Place. Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast lead Captivity captive, &c.* The most glorious Appearance of GOD upon the Earth under the *Old Testament*, was that on Mount Sinai. And as his Presence was there attended with all his glorious Angels; so when upon the Finishing of that Work He returned into Heaven, it was in the Way of Triumph with all that royal Attendance. And this prefigured the Ascent of *Christ* into Heaven. He ascended triumphantly after He had given the Law, as a Figure of his triumphant Ascent after he had fulfilled it. Having then spoiled Principalities and Powers, He made a Shew of them openly, triumphing over them, *Col. ii. 15.* So He lead Captivity captive; or all the adverse Powers in Triumph at his Chariot Wheels. I deny not but that his leading *Captivity captive*, principally respects his spiritual Conquest over *Satan*. Yet whereas He is also said to spoil Principalities and Powers, making a Shew of them openly, I no Way doubt but *Satan* the Head of the Apostasy, and the chief Princes of Darkness were lead openly in Sight of all the holy Angels, as conquered Captives. This is that which is so emphatically expressed, *Psal. xlvii.* throughout. The Cause of all-triumphant Rejoycing therein declared, is, that GOD was gone  
up



up with a Shout, the LORD with the Sound of a Trumpet, ver. 5. which is nothing but the glorious Ascent of *Christ* into Heaven, said to be accompanied with Shouts, and the Sound of a Trumpet, the Expressions of triumphant Rejoycing, because of the glorious Acclamations that were made thereon by all the Attendants of the Throne of God.

2.] THE Place whither He thus ascended, is on high. *He ascended up on high*, Ephes. iv. 8. That is, Heaven. He went into *Heaven*, Acts i. 11. And the *Heavens must receive Him*, ver. 3,—21. Not these Heavens which we behold: For in his Ascension *He passed through them*, Heb. iv. 14. and is made *higher than they*, Chap. vii. 27. But into the Place of the Residence of GOD in Glory and Majesty, *Heb. i. 3.—viii. 1.—xii. 2.* There on the *Throne of GOD*, *Rev. iii. 21.* On the *Right-Hand of the Majesty* on high, He sits down in the full Possession of all Power and Authority. This is the Palace of this King of Saints and Nations. There is his royal eternal Throne, *Heb. i. 8.* And *many Crowns* are on his Head, *Rev. xix. 12.* or, all Dignity and Honour.

3.] THE End for which He thus triumphantly ascended into Heaven, is twofold. *First*, The Destruction of all his Enemies in their remaining Powers. He rules them *with a Rod of Iron*, and in his due Time will dash them in Pieces as a Potter's Vessel. For He must *reign until all his Enemies are made his Footstool*. Although at present for the most Part they despise his Authority, yet they are all absolutely in his Power, and shall fall under his eternal Displeasure. *Secondly*, The Preservation and Rule of his Church, both, as to that internal State of the Souls of them that believe, and the external Order of the Church in its Worship and Obedience, and its Preservation under all Oppositions

and Persecutions in this World. There is in each of these such a continual Exercise of divine Wisdom, Power, and Care, the Effects of them are so great and marvellous, and the Fruits of them so abundant unto the Glory of GOD, that the World would not contain the Books that might be written of them; but to handle them distinctly is not our present Design.

[2.] HIS Ascension may be considered as gracious; as the Ascent of an High-Priest. And herein the Things before-mentioned are of a distinct Consideration.

1.] As to the Manner of it, and the Design of it, He gives an Account of them Himself, *John* xx. 17. His Design herein was not the taking on Him the Exercise of his Power; but the acting with GOD on the Behalf of his Disciples. *I go, saith He, to my Father, and your Father, to my GOD, and your GOD; not his GOD and Father with respect unto eternal Generation, but as He was their GOD and Father also. And He was so, as He was their GOD and Father in the same Covenant with Himself; wherein He was to procure of GOD all good Things for them. Through the Blood of this everlasting Covenant, namely, his own Blood, whereby this Covenant was established, and all the good Things of it secured unto the Church, He was brought again from the Dead, that He might live ever to communicate them unto the Church, Heb. xiii. 20, 21. With this Design in his Ascension, and the Effects of it, did He often comfort the Hearts of his Disciples, when they were ready to faint on the Apprehensions of his leaving them here below, John xiv. 1, 2. Chap. xvi. 5, 6, 7. And this was typified by the *Ascent of the High-Priest*, unto the Temple of old. The Temple was situated on*

on an Hill, high and steep, so that there was no Approach unto it but by Stairs. Hence in their Wars it was looked on as a most impregnable Fortrefs. And the solemn Ascent of the High-Priest into it on the Day of Expiation, had a Resemblance of this Ascent of *Christ* into Heaven. For after he had offered the Sacrifice in the outward Court, and made Atonement for Sin, he entered into the most holy Place, a Type of Heaven itself, as the Apostle declares, *Heb. ix. 24.* of Heaven, as it was the Place whereinto our High-Priest was to enter. And it was a joyful Ascent, though not triumphant. All the Psalms from the 120th to the 134th inclusively, whose Titles are שירים המעלות, *Songs of Degrees*, or rather Ascents or Risings, being generally Songs of Praise, were sung to GOD at the Resting-Places of that Ascent: Especially was this represented on the Day of Jubilee. The Proclamation of the Jubilee was on the same Day that the High-Priest entered into the holy Place; and at the same Time; namely, on the *Tenth Day of the seventh Month*, *Levit. xvi. 29. Chap. xxv. 9.* Then did the Trumpet sound throughout the Land, the whole Church; and Liberty was proclaimed unto all Servants, Captives, and such as had sold their Possessions; that they might return to them again. This being a great Type of the Ascent of our High-Priest into his Sanctuary, when he proclaimed the *acceptable Year of the LORD, and the Day of Vengeance of our GOD, to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give them Beauty for Ashes, the Oyl of Joy for Mourning, the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness, that they might be called Trees of Righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He might be glorified, Isa. lxi. 2, 3.* For in this Ascension of *Christ*, Proclamation was made in the Gospel, of Mercy, Pardon, Peace, Joy, and everlasting Refreshments, unto all



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that were distressed by Sin, with a Communication of Righteousness unto them, to the eternal Glory of GOD. Such was the Entrance of our High-Priest into Heaven, with Acclamations of Joy and Praise unto GOD.

2.] THE Place whereinto He thus entered was the Sanctuary above, the *Tabernacle not made with Hands*, Heb. viii. 2. It was into Heaven itself, not absolutely, but as it is the *Temple of GOD*, as the Throne of Grace and Mercy-Seat are in it.

3.] THE End why the LORD *Christ* thus ascended, and thus entered into the holy Place, was *to appear in the Presence of GOD for us*, and to make *Intercession for all that come unto GOD by Him*, Heb. vii. 26, 27.—ix. 24, 25.

It may be added that when He thus left this World and ascended, the great Promise He made to his Disciples as they were to be Preachers of the Gospel; and in them to all that should succeed them in that Office, was, that He would *send the Holy Spirit unto them*, to teach and guide them, to lead them into all Truth, to declare unto them the Mysteries of Love, for the Use of the whole Church. This He promised to do, and did in the Discharge of his prophetic Office. And although his giving *Gifts unto Men* was an Act of his Kingly Power, yet it was for the End of his Prophetic Office.

FROM what hath been spoken it is evident that the LORD *Christ* ascended into Heaven, or was received up into Glory, with this Design, namely, to exercise his Office of Mediation in the Behalf of the Church until the End should be. As this was his Grace, that when He was *rich*, *for our Sakes*  
He

*He became poor; so when He was made rich again for his own Sake, He lays forth all the Riches of his Glory and Power on our Behalf.*

3. THE Glory of the State whereinto *Christ* thus enter'd, is the next Thing to be considered. For He is *sat down on the Right-Hand of the Majesty on high*. And as his Ascension with the Ends of it were twofold, so was his Glory that ensued. For his present mediatory State consists either in the Glory of his Power, or in the Glory of his Love; his Glory as a King, or his Glory as a Priest. For the first of these, or his royal Glory, in sovereign Power and Authority over the whole Creation of GOD, all in Heaven and Earth, Persons and Things, Angels and Men, Good and Bad, Alive and Dead, all Things spiritual and eternal, Grace, Gifts, and Glory, his Right and Power to dispose of all Things according to his Will, I have declared it elsewhere. His Glory as a Priest, will be manifested in what doth ensue.



## CHAP. XV.

### *The Exercise of the Mediatory Office of CHRIST in Heaven.*

THE *third* and last Thing we proposed unto Consideration, is the Discharge of his Mediatory Office in Behalf of the Church; especially as He continueth to be a Minister of the Sanctuary, and of the true Tabernacle which GOD hath fixed and not Man.

ALL *Christians* acknowledge that his present State is a State of the highest Glory, of Exaltation above the whole Creation of GOD, above every Name that is or can be named; and hereon they esteem their own Honour and Safety to depend. Neither do they doubt of his Power, but take it for granted that He can do whatever He pleaseth, which is the Ground of their placing all their Confidence in Him. But we must shew moreover that his present State is a State of Office, Work, and Duty. He leads not in Heaven a Life of meer Glory and Blessedness, but a Life of Office, Love, and Care also. He lives as the Mediator of the Church, as the King, Priest, and Prophet thereof. Hereon do our present Safety, and our eternal Salvation depend. Without the continual Actings of the Office, Power, and Care of *Christ*, the Church could not be preserved one Moment.

THUS He is at once represented in all his Offices, *Rev. v. 6. And I beheld, and lo in the Midst of the Throne, and of the four living Creatures, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven Horns, and seven Eyes, which are the seven Spirits of GOD sent forth into all the Earth.* The whole Representation of the Glory of GOD, with all his holy Attendants, is here called his *Throne*, whence *Christ* is said to be in the *Midst* of it. And this He is in his kingly Glory; with Respect also whereunto He is said to have *seven Horns*, or perfect Power for the Accomplishment of his Will, and with Respect unto his sacerdotal Office, He is represented as a *Lamb that had been slain*; it being his Oblation that is continually effectual for the Church. For as the *Lamb of GOD*, in the Offering of Himself, He takes away the Sins of the World. And as a Prophet He is said to have *seven Eyes*, which are the *seven Spirits of GOD*; or a perfect Fulness of all  
spiritual



spiritual Light and Wisdom, with Power for the Communication of Gifts and Grace to the Church.

THE Nature of these Offices of *Christ*, I have declared elsewhere. I now no farther consider them but as they relate to the present State of *Christ* in Heaven. And because it would be too long to treat of them all distinctly, I shall confine myself to his Priestly Office. With Respect thereto the Things ensuing may be observed —

1. THE LORD *Christ* entered into Heaven, the Place of the Residence of the Glory of GOD, as into a Temple, a Tabernacle, a Place of sacred Worship. He did so as the High-Priest of the Church, *Heb. ix. 24. He is not entered into the holy Places made with Hands, which are the Figures of the true, but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the Presence of GOD for us.* He is entered into Heaven as it was figured by the Tabernacle of old, which was the Place of all sacred and solemn Worship. And therefore is He said to enter into it *thro' the Vail, Heb. vi. 19, 20. Chap. x. 19, 20.* Which was the Way of Entrance into the holy Place both in the Tabernacle and Temple.

2. IN this Temple, this Sanctuary the LORD *Christ* continueth gloriously to minister before the Throne of Grace, in the Discharge of his Office. As the High-Priest went into the holy Place to minister for the Church unto GOD, before the Ark and Mercy-Seat, which were Types of the Throne of Grace; so doth our High-Priest act for us in the real Presence of GOD. He did not enter into the holy Place only to reside there in a Way of Glory, but to give GOD all that Glory, Honour, and Worship which He will receive from the Church. And we may consider both

[I.] WHAT

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(1.) WHAT this Work is, and

(2.) How it is performed.

1.) IN general; herein *Christ* exerciseth all his Love, Compassion, and Care towards the Church and every Member of it. This are we frequently called to the Consideration of, as the Foundation of all our Consolation, the Fountain of all our Obedience. Thoughts hereof are the Relief of Believers in all their Distresses and Temptations; and the Effects of it, are all their Supplies of Grace enabling them to persevere in their Obedience. He doth appear for them as the great Representative of the Church to transact all their Affairs with GOD. And that for three Ends:

(1. To make effectual the Attonement that He hath made for Sin. By the continual Representation of it, and of Himself as a *Lamb that hath been slain*. He procures the Application of the Benefits of it in Reconciliation and Peace with GOD, unto their Souls. Hence are all Believers sprinkled and washed with his Blood in all Generations; in the Application of the Virtue of it to them, as shed for them.

(2. To undertake their Protection, and to plead their Cause against all the Accusations of *Satan*. He yet accuseth and chargeth them before GOD. But *Christ* is their Advocate at the Throne of Grace.

3.) To intercede for them; as to the Communication of all Grace and Glory, all Supplies of the Spirit, the Accomplishment of all the Promises. This is the Work of *Christ* in Heaven. In these Things as the High-Priest of the Church, doth He  
continue

continue to administer his Mediator Office. And herein is He attended with the Songs of all the holy Ones that are in the Presence of GOD, giving Glory to GOD by Him.

(2.) As to the Manner of this glorious Administration, sundry Things are to be considered.

1.) THAT this Transaction of Things in Heaven, being in the Temple of GOD, and before the Throne of Grace, is a solemn instituted Worship at present, which shall cease at the End of the World. Religious Worship it is; or that whereby all the Saints above give Glory to GOD. And it is instituted Worship, in that it is GOD's especial Appointment in and by *Christ* the Mediator. And Believers at present have by Faith an Admission into Communion with this Church above in all its divine Worship. For *we are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the City of the living GOD, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable Company of Angels; to the general Assembly and Church of the First-born, which are written in Heaven; and to GOD the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of just Men made perfect; and to Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant, and to the Blood of Sprinkling, which speaketh better Things than that of Abel, Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24.*

O that my Soul might abide in this Exercise of Faith; that I might yet enjoy a clearer Prospect of this Glory, and Inspection into the Beauty and Order of this blessed Assembly! How inconceivable is the Representation that GOD here makes of the Glory of his Wisdom, Love, and Mercy in *Christ*? How excellent is the Manifestation of the Glory of *Christ* in his Person and Offices, the Glory given Him by the Father? How little a Portion do we know, or can Experience of the refreshing Communications of divine Love to all the Members of  
this



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this Assembly; or of that unchangeable Delight in beholding the Glory of *Christ*, and of GOD in Him; of that Ardency of Affections wherewith they cleave unto Him, and continual Exultation of Spirit, whereby they triumph in the Praises of GOD? To enter into this Assembly by Faith, to joyn with it in the Praises of *Him that sits on the Throne, and the Lamb for evermore*; to labour after a Frame of Heart in holy Affections, in some Correspondency with that which is in the Saints above, is the Duty, and ought to be the Design of the Church of Believers here below. So much as we are farthered herein by our present Ordinances, so much Advantage have we by them, and no more. A constant View of this Glory, will cast Contempt on all the desirable Things of this World, and deliver our Minds from any dreadful Apprehensions of what is most terrible therein.

2.) THIS heavenly Worship in the Sanctuary above, administer'd by the High-Priest over the House of GOD, is conspicuously glorious. The Glory of GOD is the great End of it; that is, the Manifestation of it. The Manifestation of the Glory of GOD consists in the Effects of his infinite Wisdom, Goodness, and Power; declaratively, in the express Acknowledgment of it with Praise. Herein therefore doth the solemn Worship of GOD in the Sanctuary above consist; setting aside only the immediate Actings of *Christ* in his Intercession. It is a glorious express Acknowledgment of the Wisdom, Love, Goodness, and Power of GOD, in the Redemption, Sanctification and Salvation of the Church by *Jesus Christ*, with a continual Ascription of all divine Honour to Him. For the Manner of its Performance, our present Light into it, is but obscure. Some Things have an Evidence in them. As,

(1. THAT

(1. THAT there is nothing carnal in it, or suited to the Imaginations of Men. In the Thoughts of Heaven, most Persons are apt to frame Images in their Minds of such Things as they suppose they could be delighted with. But they are far remote from the Worship of this holy Assembly. The Worship of the Gospel, which is spiritually glorious, makes a nearer Approach to it, than that of the Temple which was outwardly so.

(2. IT is not merely mental; or transacted only in the silent Thoughts of each individual Person. For as we have shewed, it is the Worship of a Church Assembly wherein they have all Communion and joyn in the Performance of it. We know not well the Manner of Communication between Angels and the Spirits of just Men made perfect. It is expressed in the Scripture by Voices, Postures, and Gestures; which although they are not of the same Nature as absolutely ours are, yet are they really significant of the Things they would express, and a Means of mutual Communication. Yea I know not how far GOD may give them the Use of Words, whereby to express his Praise. But the Manner of it is such, whereby the whole Assembly above joyntly celebrate the Praises of GOD. And the Glory hereof consists in three Things:

[1.] THE blessed and beautiful Order of all Things in that Sanctuary. *Job* describes the Grave beneath to be a Place without any Order, and where the Light is as Darknes, Chap. x. 22. All above is Order and Light; every Person and Thing in its proper Place and Exercise.

1.) HEAVEN itself is a Temple, a Sanctuary, made so by the especial Presence of GOD, and the Mini-

Ministration of *Christ* in the Tabernacle of his human Nature.

2.) GOD is on the Throne of Grace; gloriously exalted on the Account of his Grace, and for the Dispensation of it. To the Saints above He is on the Throne of Grace, in that they are in the full Enjoyment of the Effects of his Grace, and give Glory to Him on the Account thereof. He is so also with Respect to the Church below, in the continual Communications of Grace and Mercy thro' *Christ*.

3.) THE LORD *Christ* in his human Nature is before the Throne, acting his Mediatory Office in Behalf of the Church.

4.) ALL the holy Angels in the various Orders and Degrees of their Ministration, are about the Throne continually. So

5.) ARE the Spirits of just Men made perfect, in the various Measures of Light and Glory. And these Things were obscurely represented in the Order of the Church at its first Erection in the Wilderness; for the Ordinances of GOD among them were Patterns or Figures of *heavenly Things*, Heb. ix. 23. (1. In the Midst was the *Tabernacle* or Sanctuary which represented the Sanctuary or Temple above. (2. In the most holy Place were the Ark and Mercy-Seat Representatives of the Throne of Grace. (3. The Ministry of the High-Priest, a Type of the Ministry of *Christ*. (4. The *Levites* who attended on the High-Priest, did represent the Ministry of Angels, attending on *Christ* in the Discharge of his Office. And (5. round about them were the Tribes in their Order.



[2.] IN the full, clear Apprehensions which all the blessed Ones have of the Glory of God in *Christ*, of the Work and Effects of his Wisdom and Grace towards Mankind. These are the Foundations of divine Worship. And because our Conceptions about them, are obscure and inevident, our Worship is weak and imperfect also. But all is open unto the Saints above. We are in the Dust, the Blood, the Noise of the Battle; they are victoriously at Peace, and have a perfect View of what they have passed through, and what they have attained. They are come to the Springs of Life and Light, and are filled with Admiration of the Grace of God in themselves and one another. What they see in God, and in *Jesus Christ*, what they have Experience of in themselves, what they know and learn from others, are all of them inconceivable and inexpressible. It is well for us, if we have so much Experience of these Things, as to see a real Glory in the Fulness and Perfection of them. The Apprehensions by Sight without Mixture of Unsteadiness or Darkness, without the Allay of Fears or Temptations, with an ineffable Sense of the Things themselves on their Hearts, are the Springs of the holy Worship which is in Heaven.

[3.] IN the glorious Manner of the Performance of it. Now whereas it ariseth from Sight and present Enjoyment, it must consist in a continual Ascription of Glory and Praise unto God; and so it is described in the Scripture. And how little a Portion of the Glory of these Things is it, that we can apprehend!

3. IN this solemn Assembly before the Throne of Grace, the LORD *Jesus Christ*, the great High-Priest, doth represent and render acceptable unto God, the Worship of the Church here below. So

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it is expressed, *Rev. viii. 3, 4.* *And an Angel came and stood at the Altar, having a golden Censer, and there was given unto him much Incense, that he should offer it with the Prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar which was before the Throne; and the Smoke of the Incense which came with the Prayers of the Saints, ascended up unto GOD out of the Angel's Hand.* It is a Representation of the High-Priest burning Incense on the golden Altar on the Day of Atonement, when He entered into the most holy Place. For that Altar was placed just at the Entrance of it, directly before the Ark and Mercy-Seat, representing the Throne of GOD. This *Angel* therefore is our High-Priest; none else could approach that *Altar*, or offer Incense on it, the Smoke whereof was to enter into the holy Place. And the Prayers of all Saints is an Expression of the whole Worship of the Church. And this is represented before the Throne of GOD, by this High-Priest. And it is not said that their Prayers came unto the Throne of GOD, but the *Smoke of the Incense out of the Hand of the Angel* did so. For it is the Incense of the Intercession of *Christ* alone that gives them their Acceptance with GOD. Without this, none of our Prayers, Praises, or Thanksgivings would ever have Access to the Throne of Grace. Blessed be GOD for this Relief, under the Consideration of the Weakness and Imperfection of them. Wherefore in Him and by Him alone, do we present all our Desires, and Prayers, and whole Worship to GOD. And herein, in all our Worship do we ourselves *enter into the most holy Place*, *Heb. x. 19.* We do it not merely by Faith, but by this especial Exercise of it, in putting our Prayers into the Hand of this High-Priest.

THERE are three Things in all our Worship that would hinder its Access to GOD, and Acceptance  
with

with Him. The *first* is the Iniquity that cleaves unto it; *secondly*, the Weakness or Imperfection that at best is in it; and, *thirdly*, the Unworthiness of the Persons by whom it is performed. With Reference unto these Things, the *Law* could never perfect the Consciences of them that came to God by the Sacrifices of it. But there are three Things in the sacerdotal Ministration of *Christ*, that take them all away. And they are, *First*, The Influence of his Oblation. *Secondly*, The Efficacy of his Intercession; and, *Thirdly*, The Dignity of his Person. Through the *first* of these He takes away all the Iniquity of our holy Things; as *Aaron* did typically of old, by Virtue of the Plate of Gold, with the Name of God (a Figure of *Christ*) on his Forehead, *Exod.* xxviii. 36, 37, 38. He hath made Atonement for them in the Blood of his Oblation, and they appear not in the Presence of God. Thro' the *second*, or Efficacy of his Intercession, He gives Acceptance to our Prayers and Worship. For this is that Incense whose Smoke comes up with the Prayers of all Saints to the Throne of God. Thro' the *third*, or the Dignity of his Person, wherein He appears as the Representative of his whole mystical Body; He takes away from our Consciences that Sense of our own Vileness and Unworthiness, which would not suffer us to approach with Boldness to the Throne of Grace. In these Things consists the Worship of all Believers, without which as it would not be acceptable to God, so we could have neither Peace nor Consolation in it ourselves.

4. HEREIN hath the Church that is triumphant, Communion with that which is yet militant. The Assembly above have not lost their Concern for the Church here below. As we rejoyce in their Glory, Safety, and Happiness, that having passed through the Storms and Tempests, the Temptations, Suffer-



ings, and Dangers of this Life; so are they full of Affection towards their Brethren exercised with the same Temptations, Difficulties, and Dangers which they have passed through, with earnest Desires for their Deliverance and Safety. Wherefore when they behold the *LORD Jesus Christ*, as the great High-Priest over the House of *GOD*, presenting their Prayers, with all their holy Worship unto Him, rendering them acceptable by the Incense of his own Intercession, it fills them with Satisfaction, and continually excites them to assign Praise, and Glory, and Honour unto Him. This is the State of the Saints above, with Respect to the Church here below. This is all which may be herein ascribed to them, and this may safely be so. In these Things consist their Communion with the Church here below. A Love they have to it, from their Union with it in the same mystical Body, *Ephes. i. 10*. A Sense they have of its Condition from the Experience they had of it in the Days of their Flesh. A great Concern they have for the Glory of *GOD* in them, and a fervent Desire of their eternal Salvation. They know that without them they shall not be absolutely made perfect in their whole Persons, *Rev. vi. 11*. In this State of Things, they continually behold the *LORD Jesus Christ*, presenting their Prayers before the Throne of Grace, making Intercession for them, appearing to plead their Cause against all their Adversaries, transacting all their Affairs in the Presence of *GOD*, taking Care of their Salvation. This continually fills them with an holy Satisfaction, and is a great Part of the subject Matter of their incessant Praises.

5. THERE is herein a full Manifestation of the Wisdom of *GOD*, in all the Institutions of the Tabernacle and Temple of old. Herein the Vail is fully taken off, and that obscure Representation of heavenly

heavenly Things is brought forth to Light and Glory. It is true, this is done to a great Degree in the Dispensation of the Gospel. By the Coming of *Christ* in the Flesh, and the Discharge of his Mediator Office in this World, the Substance of what they did prefigure is accomplished. And in the Revelation of the Gospel, the Nature and End of them is declared. Howbeit they extend their Signification also to Things within the Vail, or the Discharge of the Priestly Office of *Christ* in the heavenly Sanctuary, *Heb. ix. 24.* Wherefore as we have not yet a Perfection of Light to understand the Depth of the Mysteries contained in them; so themselves also were not absolutely fulfilled untill the *LORD Christ* discharged his Office in the holy Place. This is the Glory of the Pattern which *GOD* shewed unto *Moses* in the Mount, and made conspicuous and evident unto all. Therein especially do the Saints of the *Old Testament*, who were exercised all their Days in those typical Institutions, whose Design they could not comprehend; see the manifold Wisdom and Goodness of *GOD* in them all.

6. ALL that the *LORD Christ* receives of the Father on the Account of this Mediation, He is endowed with Sovereign Power to execute and accomplish. Therefore is He said, as a Priest, to be made higher than the Heavens, and as a Priest to sit down at the Right-Hand of the Majesty on high, *Heb. viii. 2.* This glorious Power doth not immediately belong to Him on the Account of his Sacerdotal Office, but it is that Qualification of his Person which is necessary to the effectual Discharge of it. Hence it is said of Him, that He should bear the Glory, and sit and rule upon his Throne, and should be a Priest upon his Throne, *Zech. vi. 13.* A Throne properly belongs unto *Christ*, with Respect unto his Kingly Office. Howbeit the Power belonging to his

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Throne

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Throne being necessary to the effectual Discharge of his priestly Office, as He sits and rules on his Throne, so it is said that He is a *Priest on his Throne* also.

THIS is one Instance of the *present State* of *Christ* in Heaven, and of the Work which He doth there perform, and the only Instance I shall insist upon. He was made a Priest *after the Power of an endless Life*, the Life which He now leads in Heaven, and lives for ever to make Intercession for us. He was dead, but is alive, and lives for evermore, and hath the Keys of Hell and Death, all Power over the Enemies of his Church. GOD on a Throne of Grace; *Christ* is the High-Priest, so on his Right-Hand in Glory and Power, as yet to be before the Throne in the Virtue of his Sacerdotal Office, with the whole Concernment of the Church on his Hand, transacting all Things with GOD for them: All the *holy Angels*, and the *Spirits of just Men made perfect*, encompassing the Throne with continual Praises unto GOD, even the Father and Him, on the Account of the Work of infinite Wisdom and Grace in his Incarnation, Mediation, and Salvation of the Church thereby; Himself continuing to manage the Cause of the whole Church before GOD, presenting all their Prayers and Services unto Him, perfumed with his own Intercession, is that Resemblance of Heaven and its present Glory, which the Scripture offers unto us. But alas, how weak, how dark, how low, are our Conceptions of these heavenly Things! we see yet as through a Glass darkly, and know but in Part. The Time is approaching when we shall see these Things with *open Face*, and *know even as we are known*. The best Improvement we can make of this Prospect, whilst Faith supplies the Place of Sight, is to be stirred up thereby unto holy Longings after Participation in this Glory,



Glory, and constant Diligence in that holy Obedience whereby we may arrive thereto.

I SHALL close this Discourse with a little Review of somewhat that passed before. From the Consideration of that Place of the Apostle, *that at the End, Christ shall give up the Kingdom unto the Father*, I declared that all the State of Things which we have described, shall then cease, and all Things issue in the immediate Enjoyment of GOD Himself. I would extend this no farther than as to what concerneth the Exercise of *Christ's* Mediatorial Office with Respect to the Church here below, and the Enemies of it. But there are some Things which belong to this State, which shall continue to all Eternity: As,

(1. I BELIEVE the Person of *Christ*, in and by his human Nature, shall be for ever the immediate Head of the whole glorified Creation. GOD having gathered all Things to an Head in Him, the Knot of that Collection shall never be dissolved. We shall never lose our Relation to Him, nor He his to us.

(2. I THEREFORE believe, He shall be the Means of Communication between GOD and his glorified Saints for ever. What are, what will be the glorious Communications of GOD unto his Saints for ever, in Life, Light, Power, Joy, Rest, and ineffable Satisfaction, I shall not now enquire. But this I say, they shall be all made thro' the Person of the Son and the human Nature therein. That Tabernacle shall never be folded up, never be laid aside as useless. And if it be said, that I cannot declare the Manner of the eternal Communication of GOD to his Saints in Glory by *Christ*; I shall only say, that I cannot declare the Manner

Manner of his Communications of Himself in Grace by *Christ*, to the Souls of Men in this World, and yet I believe it. How much more must we satisfy ourselves with the Evidence of Faith alone in those Things, which as yet, are more incomprehensible. And our Adherence to GOD by Love and Delight, shall always be through *Christ*. For GOD will be conceived of to Eternity, according to the Manifestation that He hath made of Himself in Him. This shall not be by Faith with Respect to the actual Exercise of the Mediation of *Christ*, as now we cleave to GOD; but it shall be by all satisfying Love to GOD, as He hath manifested himself, and will manifest Himself in *Christ*.

(3. THE Person of *Christ*, and therein his human Nature shall be the eternal Object of divine Glory, Praise, and Worship. The Life of Glory is not a meer State of Contemplation. Vision is the Principle of it, as Faith is of the Life of Grace. Love is the great vital Acting of that Principle, in Adherence to GOD with eternal Delight. But this is active in it also. It shall be exercised in the continual Ascription of Glory, Praise, and Honour to GOD, and the glorious Exercise of all Sorts of Grace therein; hereof the Lamb, the Person of *Christ* is the eternal Object with that of the Father and the Spirit; the human Nature in the Son admitted into the Communion of the same eternal Glory.

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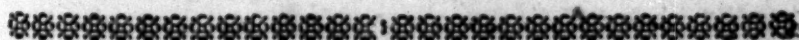
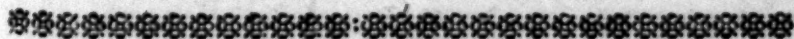
OF  
COMMUNION

WITH

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THE

FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST.



OF



# COMMUNION

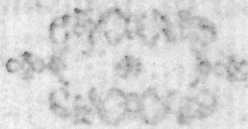
And one Adoration to One by Love and Obedience  
shall always be made to the Most Holy Communion  
as a Sacrament of the Kingdom of God  
which is the Body of Christ  
and the Blood of Christ  
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FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST  
who are one God  
and who are one Lord  
who are one Spirit  
who are one Substance  
who are one Power  
who are one Essence  
who are one Being  
who are one God



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OF  
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PART I.

CHAP. I.

*That BELIEVERS have Communion with  
G O D. Of the Nature of Communion  
in general.*

I N the first Epistle of *John*, Chap. i. Ver. 3.  
The Apostle assures them to whom he wrote,  
that the Fellowship of Believers is with the  
Father, and with his Son *Jesus Christ*. And this  
he

he doth with such an unusual Kind of Expression as bears the Force of an Asseveration.

THE outward Appearances and Condition of the Saints in those Days being very mean and contemptible, their Leaders being accounted as the Filth of this World, and as the *off-scouring of all Things*, the inviting others to Fellowship with them, and a Participation of the precious Things which they did enjoy, seems to be exposed to many contrary Reasonings, and Objections: What Benefit is there in Communion with them? Is it any Thing else but to be Sharers in Troubles, Reproaches, all Manner of Evils? To prevent, or remove these and the like Exceptions, the Apostle gives them to whom he wrote to know, and that with some Earnestness of Expression, that notwithstanding all the Disadvantages their Fellowship lay under, yet in Truth it was and would be found to be, very honourable, glorious, and desirable: For truly saith he, *our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

THIS being asserted by the Apostle, we may boldly follow him with our Affirmation, viz. *That the Saints of GOD have Communion with Him.*

BY Nature, since the Entrance of Sin, no Man hath any Communion with GOD. He is Light we are Darkness, and what Communion hath Light with Darkness? He is Life, we are dead, He is Love, we are Enmity; and what Agreement can there be between us? Men in such a Condition, having neither *Christ*, nor Hope, nor GOD in the World. *Being alienated from the Life of GOD thro' the Ignorance that is in them.* Now, *two cannot walk together unless they be agreed.* Whilst there is this Distance between GOD and Man,



Man, there is no Walking together for them in any Fellowship, or Communion. Our first Interest in GOD, was so lost by Sin that there was left to us (in ourselves) no Possibility of a Recovery. As we had deprived ourselves of all Power for a Return, so GOD had not revealed any Way of Access unto Himself. Not any Work that GOD had made, not any Attribute that He had revealed, could give the least Light into such a Dispensation.

THE Manifestation of Grace and pardoning Mercy, which is the only Door of Entrance into any such Communion, is not committed unto any but unto Him alone, in whom it is, by whom that Grace and Mercy was purchased, through whom it is dispensed, who reveals it from the Bosom of the Father. Hence this Communion with GOD is not in express Terms mentioned in the Old Testament. The Thing itself is found there; but the clear Light of it, and the Boldness of Faith in it, is discovered in the Gospel, and by the Spirit administred therein. By that Spirit we have this Liberty. *Abraham* was the Friend of GOD. *David* a Man after *his own Heart*. *Enoch* walked with Him. All enjoying this Communion for the Substance of it: But the Way into the Holiest was not yet made manifest, whilst the first Tabernacle was standing, *Heb. ix. 8*. Tho' they had Communion with GOD, yet they had not a *Boldness* and Confidence in that Communion. This follows the Entrance of our High-Priest into the most holy Place, *Heb. iv. 16.—x. 9*. The Vail also was upon them, that they had not *Freedom* and Liberty in their Access to GOD, *2 Cor. iii. 15, 16, &c.* But now in *Christ*, we have *Boldness* and *Access with Confidence* to GOD. This Boldness and Access with Confidence, the Saints of old

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were not acquainted with. By *Jesus Christ* alone then on all Considerations, is this Distance taken away; *He hath consecrated for us a new and living Way* (the old being quite shut up) *through the Vail, that is to say his Flesh*, Heb. x. 20. *And thro' Him we have an Access by one Spirit unto the Father*, Eph. ii. 18. *We who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the Blood of Christ*, for He is our Peace. Upon this new Foundation, by this new and living Way, are Sinners admitted to Communion with GOD. And truly for Sinners to have Fellowship with the infinitely holy GOD, is an astonishing Dispensation. To speak a little of it in general, Communion relates to Things and Persons. A joint Participation in any Thing whatever, Good or Evil, Duty or Enjoyment, Nature or Actions, gives this Denomination. A common Interest in the same Nature gives all Men a Fellowship or Communion therein. Of the Elect it is said, *Heb. ii. 14. These Children partook of*, or had Fellowship with the rest of the World, *in Flesh and Blood*; the same common Nature with the rest of Mankind. There is also a Communion as to State and Condition, whether it be good or evil; and this either in Things internal and spiritual, such as is the Communion of Saints among themselves; or in Respect of outward Things; so was it with *Christ* and the two Thieves, as to one Condition. Our Communion with GOD is not comprized in any of these Kinds; of some of them it is exclusive. The infinite Disparity between GOD and Man, made the great Philosopher conclude, That there could be no Friendship between them. Some Distance in the Persons holding Friendship he could allow, but that between GOD and Man, in his Apprehension left no Place for it. Another says indeed, That there is *communitas homini cum DEO*, a certain Fellowship be-

between GOD and Man. But the general Intercourse of Providence is all he apprehended: Some arose to higher Expressions, but they understood nothing whereof they spake. This Knowledge is hid in *Christ*. It is too wonderfull for Nature, as sinfull and corrupted. Terror and Apprehensions of Death at the Presence of GOD, is all that it guides unto. But we have, as was said, a new Foundation, with a new Discovery of this Privilege.

OUR Communion with GOD, consisteth in his Communication of Himself to us, with our Return unto Him, of that which He requireth and accepteth, flowing from that Union which in *Jesus Christ* we have with Him. And it is twofold, (1.) perfect and compleat, in the full Fruition of his Glory, and total giving up ourselves to Him, resting in Him as our utmost End, which we shall enjoy, when we see Him as He is: (2.) initial and incompleat, in the first Fruits and Dawning of that Perfection, which we have here in Grace.

IT is of that mutual Communication in giving and receiving, after a most holy and spiritual Manner, which is between GOD and the Saints, while they walk together in a Covenant of Peace, ratified in the Blood of *Jesus*, whereof we are to treat. And this we shall do, if GOD permit: In the mean Time, praying the GOD and Father of our LORD *Jesus Christ*, who hath of the Riches of his Grace, recovered us from a State of Enmity, into a Condition of Communion and Fellowship with Himself, that both he that writes, and they that read the Words of this Mercy, may have such a Taste of his Sweetness and Excellencies therein, as to be stirred up to a farther



Longing after the Fulness of his Salvation, and the eternal Fruition of Him in Glory.



## CHAP. II.

*That the Saints have this Communion distinctly, with the FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT.*

**T**HAT the Saints have Communion with GOD, has been declared. The Manner how this Communion is carried on, and the Matter wherein it doth consist, comes next under Consideration. For the first, in Respect of the distinct Persons of the Godhead, with whom they have this Fellowship, it is either distinct and peculiar, or else, obtained and exercised jointly and common. That the Saints have distinct Communion with the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that is, distinctly with the Father, and distinctly with the Son, and distinctly with the Holy Spirit, and in what this distinct Communion doth consist, must in the first Place be made manifest.

I JOHN V. 7. The Apostle tells us, *There are three that bear Witness in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit.* In Heaven they are, and bear Witness to us. And what is it that they bear Witness to? Unto the Sonship of *Christ*, and Salvation of Believers in his Blood. Of the carrying on of that, both by Blood and Water, Justification

cation and Sanctification, is He there treating. Now how do they bear Witness hereto? Even as three, as three distinct Witnesses. When God witnesseth concerning our Salvation, surely it is incumbent on us to receive his Testimony. And as He beareth Witness, so are we to receive it. Now this is done distinctly. The Father beareth Witness, the Son beareth Witness, and the Holy Spirit beareth Witness; for they are three distinct Witnesses. So then are we to receive their several Testimonies, and in doing so, we have Communion with them severally; for in this giving and receiving Testimony, consists no small Part of our Fellowship with God.

I COR. xii. 4, 5, 6. The Apostle speaking of the Distribution of Gifts and Graces unto the Saints, ascribes them distinctly in Respect of their Communication unto the distinct Persons. *There are Diversities of Gifts, but the same Spirit.* The one and self same Spirit is the Holy Ghost, 12. *And there are Differences of Administrations, but the same LORD, the same LORD Jesus, v. 3. And there are Diversities of Operations, but it is the same GOD, &c. even the Father, Ephes. iv. 6.* So Graces and Gifts are bestowed, and so are they received.

AND not only in the Emanation of Grace from GOD, and the *Illapses* of the Spirit on us, but also in all our Approaches to GOD, is the same Distinction observed: For *thro' Christ we have an Access by one Spirit, unto the Father, Eph. ii. 18.* The Persons being herein consider'd, as engaged distinctly in the Accomplishment of the Will of GOD.

SOMETIME indeed there is exprefs Mention made only of the Father and the Son, 1 *John* i. 3. *Our Fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.* The Particle *and* is both distinguishing, and uniting. Also *John* xiv. 23. *If a Man love Me, he will keep my Words, and my Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our Abode with him.* It is in this Communion, wherein Father and Son do make their Abode with the Soul.

SOMETIMES the Son only is spoken of, 1 *Cor.* i. 9. *GOD is faithfull by whom ye were called unto the Fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our LORD.* And *Rev.* iii. 20. *If any Man hear my Voice and open the Door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and be with Me.*

SOMETIMES the Spirit alone is mentioned, 2 *Cor.* xiii. 14. *The Grace of the LORD Jesus Christ, and the Love of GOD, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.* This distinct Communion then of the Saints with the Father, Son and Spirit, is very plain in the Scripture, but yet, it may admit of farther Demonstration.

THE Way then on the Part of the Saints, whereby in *Christ* they enjoy Communion with GOD, are all the spiritual Actings and Outgoings of their Souls in those Graces and Ways, wherein both the moral, and instituted Worship of GOD doth consist. Faith, Love, Trust, Joy, are the natural or moral Worship of GOD, whereby those in whom they are, have Communion with Him. Now these are either immediately acted on GOD, and not tied to any outward Means, or else they are drawn forth in solemn Prayer and Praise, according to that Way which He hath appointed.  
That



That the Scripture doth distinctly assign all these unto the Father, Son and Spirit: Manifesting that the Saints do, in all of them respect each Person respectively, is that I shall farther declare by particular Instances.

I. FOR the Father: Faith, Love, Obedience, are distinctly yielded by the Saints to Him, and He is peculiarly manifested in those Ways as acting towards them, which should stir them up thereto. He beareth Witness of his Son, *1 John v. 9. This is the Witness of GOD which He hath testified of his Son.* In his bearing Witness He is an Object of Belief. When He gives Testimony, He is to be received in it by Faith. And this is affirmed, *v. 10. He that believeth on the Son of GOD, hath the Witness in himself.* To believe on the Son of GOD in this Place, is to receive the LORD *Christ* as the Son, the Son given unto us for all the Ends of the Father's Love, upon the Father's Testimony: And therefore therein is Faith immediately acted on the Father.

THE like also is said of Love, *1 John ii. 15. If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.* That is, the Love which we bear to Him, not that which we receive from Him. The Father is here placed, as the Object of our Love, in Opposition to the World, which takes up our Affections. The *Father* denotes the Object, not the efficient Cause of the Love enquired after. And this Love of Him as a Father, is that which He calls his Honour, *Mal. i. 6.*

FARTHER, these Graces as acted in Prayer and Praise, and as cloathed with instituted Worship are peculiarly directed unto Him. We call on the Father, *1 Pet. i. 17. Eph. iii. 14, 15.*  
For

For this Cause I bow my Knees unto the Father of our LORD Jesus Christ, of whom the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named. Bowing the Knee, comprizeth the whole Worship of GOD, both that which is moral, and those peculiar Ways of carrying it on, which are appointed. *Isa. xlv. 23. Unto Me, saith the LORD, every Knee shall bow, and every Tongue shall swear.* Which, *v. 24. 25.* He declareth to consist in their acknowledging of Him, for *Righteousness and Strength.* The Workings then of the Spirit of Grace in that Duty are distinctly directed to the Father as such, as the Father of our LORD Jesus Christ. And therefore the same Apostle doth in another Place, expressly join, and yet as expressly distinguish the Father and the Son in directing his Supplications, *1 Thess. iii. 11. GOD Himself even our Father, and our LORD Jesus Christ direct our Way unto you.* The like President also have you of Thanksgiving; *Eph. i. 3; 4. Blessed be the Father of our LORD and Saviour Jesus Christ.* I shall not add those very many Places, wherein the several Particulars that concur to that whole divine Worship wherein the Saints do hold Communion with GOD, are distinctly directed to the Person of the Father.

2. IT is so also in Reference to the Son, *John xiv. 1. You believe in GOD, saith Christ, believe also in Me.* Believe also, act Faith distinctly on Me; Faith divine, supernatural, that Faith whereby you believe in GOD, that is, the Father. Yea, the distinct affixing of Faith, Affiance and Confidence on the LORD Jesus Christ the Son of GOD, as the Son of GOD, is most frequently pressed. *He that believeth on Him, is not condemned, John iii. 18. He that believeth on the Son hath eternal Life, v. 36.* The Foundation of the whole

whole is laid *John*, v. 23. *That all Men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father; he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which sent him.* For Love, I shall only add that solemn apostolical Benediction, *Eph. vi. 24. Grace be with all them that love our LORD Jesus Christ in Sincerity.* That is, with divine Love, the Love of religious Worship; which is the only incorrupt Love of the LORD Jesus.

FURTHER! that Faith, Hope and Love, in all Manner of Obedience and appointed Worship, are peculiarly due from the Saints, and distinctly directed unto the Son, is abundantly manifested from that solemn Doxology, *Rev. i. 5, 6. Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto GOD and his Father, to Him be Glory and Dominion forever, and ever, Amen.* Which yet is set forth with more Glory, *Chap. v. ver. 8. The four living Creatures, and the four and twenty Elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them Harps, and golden Vials full of Odours, which are the Prayers of Saints: And v. 13, 14. Every Creature which is in Heaven, and on Earth, and under the Earth, and such as are in the Sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, Honour, Glory, and Power, be unto Him that sitteth on the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.* The Father and the Son, He that sits upon the Throne, and the Lamb, are held out jointly, yet distinctly as the adequate Object of all divine Worship and Honour, for ever and ever. And therefore *Stephen* in his solemn dying Invocation, fixeth his Faith and Hope distinctly on Him, *Acts vii. 59, 60. LORD Jesus receive my Spirit, and LORD, lay not this Sin to their Charge!* for he knew that the Son of Man had Power to forgive Sins



Sins also. And this Worship of the LORD *Jesus*, the Apostle makes the discriminating Character of the Saints, *1 Cor. i. 2. With all (saith he) that in every Place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our LORD, both theirs and ours*; that is, with all the Saints of GOD. And Invocation generally comprizes the whole Worship of GOD. This then is the Due of our Mediator, as GOD, as the Son.

THUS also it is in Reference to the Holy Spirit. The great Sin of Unbelief is still described as an Opposition to, and a resisting of that Holy Spirit. And you have distinct Mention of the Love of the Spirit, *Rom. xv. 13.* The Apostle also peculiarly directs his Supplication to Him in that solemn Benediction, *2 Cor. xiii. 14. The Grace of our LORD Jesus Christ, the Love of GOD, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.* All such Benedictions are originally Supplications. He is likewise entitled unto all instituted Worship, from the Appointment of the Administration of Baptism in his Name, *Matt. xxviii. 18.*

Now of the Things which have been deliver'd, this is the Sum. There is no Grace whereby our Souls go forth unto GOD, no Act of divine Worship yielded unto Him, no Duty or Obedience performed, but they are distinctly directed unto Father, Son, and Spirit. But by these and such Ways as these, do we hold Communion with GOD: And therefore we have that Communion distinctly.

THIS also may farther appear, if we consider how distinctly the Persons of the Deity are revealed to act in the Communication of those good Things, wherein the Saints have Communion with  
GOD.

GOD. As all the spiritual Ascendings of their Souls, are assigned unto them respectively, so all the internal Communications of GOD to them, are held out in such a Distribution, as points at distinct Fountains. Now this is declared Two Ways.

(1. WHEN the same Thing, is at the same Time, ascribed jointly, and yet distinctly to all the Persons in the Deity. So are Grace and Peace, *Rev. i. 4, 5. Grace be unto you, and Peace from Him, which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the seven Spirits which are before his Throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful Witness.* The seven Spirits before the Throne are the Holy Spirit of GOD, considered as the Fountain of every perfect Gift and Dispensation. All are here joined together, and yet all mentioned as distinguish'd in their Communication of Grace and Peace unto the Saints.

(2.) WHEN the same Thing is attributed severally unto each Person. There is indeed no gracious Influence from above of Light, Life, Love or Grace upon our Hearts, but proceedeth in such a Dispensation. I shall give only one Instance, which is very comprehensive; and this is Teaching. The Teaching of GOD, is the real Communication of every particular Emanation from Himself unto the Saints. That Promise, *They shall be all taught of GOD*, enwraps in itself the whole Mystery of Grace, as to its actual Dispensation unto us, so far as we may be made real Possessors of it. Now this is assigned,

[1.] UNTO the Father. The Accomplishment of that Promise is peculiarly referred to Him. *John vi. 45. It is written in the Prophets,*  
*And*

*And they shall be all taught of GOD. Every Man therefore who hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto Me. This Teaching whereby we are translated from Death unto Life, brought unto Christ, unto a Participation of Life and Love in Him, it is of, and from the Father: Him we hear, of Him we learn, by Him we are brought unto Union and Communion with the LORD Jesus. This is his drawing us, his begetting us anew of his own Will, by his own Spirit. In which Work He employs the Ministers of the Gospel, Acts xxvi. 18,*

[2.] UNTO the Son. The Father proclaims Him from Heaven to be the great Teacher, in that solemn Charge to hear Him, which came once again from the excellent Glory, *This is my beloved Son, hear Him.* The whole of his Prophetical, and no small Part of his Kingly Office consists in this Teaching. Herein is He said to draw Men unto Him, as the Father is said to do in his Teaching; *John xii. 32.* which He doth with such Efficacy that the Dead hear his Voice and live. The Teaching of the Son, is a Life-giving Teaching: An effectual Influence of Light, whereby He shines into Darknes; a Communication of Life, quickening the Dead; an opening of blind Eyes, and changing of hard Hearts; a Pouring out of the Spirit, with all the Fruits thereof. Hence He claims it as his Privilege to be the sole Master, *Matt. xxiii. 10. One is your Master which is Christ.*

[3.] To the Spirit. *John xiv. 26. The Comforter He shall teach you all Things; and the anointing which you have received, saith the Apostle, abideth in you, and you need not that any Man teach you, but as the same Anointing teacheth you all Things,*  
and



and is Truth, and is no Lie; and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him, 1 John ii. 27. That Teaching Unction which is Truth itself, is only the Holy Spirit of GOD, so that He teacheth also; being given unto us, that we may know the Things that are freely given to us of GOD, 1 Cor. ii. 15.

It remaineth only to intimate wherein this Distinction lies, and is the Ground thereof. Now this is, that the Father doth it by the Way of original Authority; the Son by the Way of communicating from a purchased Treasury; the Holy Spirit by the Way of immediate Efficacy.

1.) THE Father communicateth all Grace by the Way of original Authority. *He quickeneth whom He will*, John v. 21. *Of his own Will*, begat He us, Jam. i. 18. Life-giving Power is in Respect of original Authority invested in the Father by the Way of Eminency; and therefore in sending the quickening Spirit, *Christ* is said to do it from the Father, or the Father Himself to do it. *But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send*, John xiv. 26. *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send from the Father*, John xv. 26. Though He be always said to send Himself on another Account, *John* xvi. 7.

2.) THE Son by the Way of taking out a purchased Treasury. *Of his Fulness do we all receive, and Grace for Grace*, John i. 16. And whence is this Fulness? *It pleased the Father that in Him all Fulness should dwell*, Col. i. 19. And upon what Account He hath the Dispensation of that Fulness to Him committed, you may see, *Phil.* ii. 8, 9, 10, 11. *When thou shalt make his Soul an Offering for Sin, He shall prolong his Days, and the Plea-*

*sure of the LORD shall prosper in his Hand. He shall see of the Travail of his Soul and be satisfied, by his Knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many, for He shall bear their Iniquities, Isa. liii. 10, 11. And with this Fulness He hath also Authority for the Communication of it, John v. 25, 26. Matt. xxviii. 18.*

3.) THE Spirit doth it by the Way of immediate Efficacy, *Rom. viii. 11. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the Dead, dwell in you: He that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall also quicken your mortal Bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* Here are all three comprized, with their distinct Concurrence unto our quickening. Here is the Father's authoratative Quickening, *He raised Christ from the Dead, and He shall quicken you:* And the Son's mediatory Quickening, for it is done in the *Death of Christ:* And the Spirit's immediate Efficacy, *He shall do it by the Spirit that dwelleth in you.*



### C H A P. III.

*Of the distinct Communion which Believers have with the Father.*

**H**AVING proved that there is a distinct Communion in Respect of the Father, Son, and Spirit; it remains that it be farther cleared wherein the Saints peculiarly hold this Communion with the several Persons: Which also I shall do after the premising some Observations, necessary

cessary to be previously consider'd. And they are these that follow.

1. WHEN I assign any Thing as peculiar, wherein we distinctly hold Communion with any Person, I do not exclude the other Persons from Communion with the Soul in the very same Thing. Only this I say, principally, immediately and by the Way of Eminency, we have such a Communion with some one Person; and therein with the others, secondarily and by Way of Consequence on that Foundation.

2. THERE is a Concurrence of the Operations of the whole Deity in that Dispensation, wherein each Person concurs to the Work of our Salvation, unto every Act of our Communion with each Person. Look by what Act soever, we hold Communion with any Person, there is an Influence from every Person to the putting forth of that Act. As suppose it to be the Act of Faith. It is bestowed on us by the Father: *It is not of ourselves, it is the Gift of God*, Eph. ii. 8. It is the Father that revealeth the Gospel, and *Christ* therein, *Matt. xi. 25*. And it is purchased for us by the Son: *It is given unto you for Christ's Sake to believe on Him*, Phil. i. 29. In Him are we blessed with spiritual Blessings, *Eph. i. 3*. He bestows on us, and increaseth Faith in us, *Luke xvii. 5*. And it is wrought in us by the Spirit: He administers that exceeding Greatness of his Power which He exerciseth towards them that believe, *according to the Working of his mighty Power; which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him up from the Dead*, Eph. i. 19, 20. Rom. viii. 11.



3. WHEN I assign any particular Thing wherein we hold Communion with any Person, I do not do it exclusively unto other Mediums of Communion; but only by the Way of inducing a special, and eminent Instance, for the Manifestation of the former general Assertion: Otherwise there is no Grace, or Duty wherein we have not Communion with GOD in the Way described. In every Thing wherein we are made Partakers of the Divine Nature, there is a Communication between GOD and us. So near are we unto Him in *Christ*.

THESE Observations premised, I come now to declare what it is, wherein peculiarly the Saints have Communion with the Father: And this is Love. Free, undeserved and eternal Love. This the Father peculiarly fixes upon the Saints: This they are immediately to eye in Him, to receive of Him, and to make such Returns thereof, as He is delighted with. This is the great Discovery of the Gospel. For whereas the Father as the Fountain of the Deity, is not known any other Way but as full of Indignation against Sin, nor can the Sons of Men have any other Thoughts of Him. Here He is now revealed peculiarly as Love, the Manifestation whereof is the peculiar Work of the Gospel, *Titus* iii. 4.

(1.) 1 JOHN iv. 8. GOD is Love. That the Name of GOD is here taken personally, and for the Person of the Father, not essentially, is evident from v. 9. where he is distinguished from his only begotten Son whom He sends into the World. Now, saith He, the Father is Love, that is, not only of an infinitely gracious and loving Nature, but also one that eminently and peculiarly dispenseth Himself unto us in free Love.  
The

The Apostle sets it forth in the following Verses; this is Love, v. 9. This is that which I would have you take Notice of in Him, that He makes out Love unto you, in sending his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live through Him. So also, v. 10. *He loved us and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins.* And that this is peculiarly to be eyed in Him, the Holy Ghost plainly declares, in making it antecedent to the sending of *Christ*, and all Mercies and Benefits by Him received. This Love, I say, is antecedent to the Purchase of *Christ*, although the whole Fruit thereof be made ours thereby.

(2.) So in that Distribution made by the Apostle in his solemn parting Benediction, 2 Cor. xiii. 13. *The Grace of our LORD Jesus Christ, the Love of GOD, and the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you.* Ascribing sundry Things to the distinct Persons, it is Love that He peculiarly assigns to the Father. And the Fellowship of the Spirit is mentioned with the Grace of *Christ*, and the Love of GOD, because it is by the Spirit alone that we have Fellowship with *Christ* in Grace, and with the Father in Love.

(3.) JOHN xvi. 26, 27. Saith our Saviour, *I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father Himself loveth you:* But how is this, that our Saviour saith, *I say not that I will pray the Father for you*, when He saith plainly, ch. xvi. 16. *I will pray the Father for you?* The Disciples, with all the gracious Words of their Master, were fully convinced of his tender Affection; as also, that He would not forget them, when bodily He was gone from them; but now all their Thoughts are concerning the Father, what Respect He had towards them. Saith our Saviour, take no Care

of that, nay, impose not upon Me, of procuring the Father's Love for you, but know that this is his peculiar Respect towards you, *He Himself loves you.* It is true indeed (and I told you) that *I will pray the Father to send you the Spirit, the Comforter,* and with Him all the gracious Fruits of his Love; but yet in the Point of Love itself, there is no Need of any Intercession for that, for the Father Himself loves you; resolve of that, that you may be no more troubled about it.

(4.) NAY, whereas there is a Twofold Divine Love, a Love of *good Pleasure*, and a Love of Friendship and Approbation, they are both peculiarly assigned to the Father in an eminent Manner.

1 JOHN iii. 16. GOD *so loved the World, that He sent,* &c. that is, with the Love of his Purpose, and good Pleasure, his determinate Will of doing Good. This is distinctly ascribed to Him, being laid down as the Cause of sending his Son. So *Rom. ix. 11, 12. Eph. i. 4, 5. 2 Theff. ii. 13, 14. 1 John iv. 8, 9.*

2 JOHN xiv. 23. there is Mention of that other Kind of Love whereof we speak. *If any Man love Me, saith Christ, he will keep my Words; and my Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our Abode with him.* The Love of Friendship and Approbation, is here eminently ascribed to Him; says *Christ, We will come,* even Father and Son to such a one, and dwell with him, that is, by the Spirit; but yet He would have us take Notice, that in Point of Love, the Father hath a peculiar Prerogative: *My Father will love Him.*

(5.) YEA, and as this Love is peculiarly to be eyed in Him, so it is the Fountain of all follow-



ing gracious Dispensations. Thus the Apostle sets it out, *Titus iii. 4. After that the Kindness and Love of GOD our Saviour toward Man appeared.* It is of the Father of whom he speaks; for, *ver. 6.* he tells us, that he *sheds that Love upon us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.* And this Love He makes the Hinge, upon which the great Alteration of the Saints doth turn: For, saith He, *ver. 3. We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving diverse Lusts and Pleasures, living in Malice, and Envy, hateful, and hating one another.* All out of Order, and vile, whence then is our Recovery? The whole Rise of it is from this Love of GOD, flowing out by the Ways there described. For *when the Kindness and Love of GOD appeared*, that is, in the Fruits of it, then did this Alteration ensue. To secure us hereof, there is not any Thing that hath a loving and tender Nature, which GOD hath not compared Himself to.

I SHALL not need to add any more Proofs; this is that which is demonstrated. There is Love in the Person of the Father peculiarly to the Saints, wherein He doth hold Communion with them.

Now to compleat Communion with the Father in Love, two Things are required of Believers.

(1.) THAT they receive it of Him.

(2.) THAT they make suitable Return to Him.

(1.) THAT they receive it. Communion consists in giving and receiving. Until the Love of the Father be received, we have no Communion with Him therein. How then is this Love of the Father to be received, so as to hold Fellowship with

with Him? I answer, by Faith. The receiving of it, is the believing it.

It is true, there is not an immediate Acting of Faith upon the Father, but by the Son. *He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no Man cometh unto the Father but by Him*, John xiv. 6. He is the *merciful High-Priest over the House of God*, by whom we have Access to the Throne of Grace. But when through *Christ* we have an Access unto the Father, we then behold his Glory also, and see his Love. We are then to eye it, to believe, to receive it, as in Him; the Issues and Fruits thereof, being thro' *Christ* alone. Though there be no Light for us, but in the Beams, yet we may by the Beams see the Sun, whch is the Fountain of it. Though all our Refreshment actually lye in the Streams, yet by them we are led up to the Fountain. Would Believers exercise themselves herein, they would find it a Matter of no small spiritual Improvement in their walking with God.

MANY dark and disturbing Thoughts are apt to arise in this Thing. Few can carry up their Hearts to this Heighth to rest their Souls in the Love of the Father; they live below it, in the troublesome Region of Hopes and Fears, Storms, and Clouds. All here is serene and quiet. But how to attain to this they know not. This is the Will of God, that He may be always eyed as benign, kind, tender, loving; and that peculiarly as the Father, as the great Fountain of all gracious Communications. This is that which *Christ* came to reveal, even God as a Father, *John i. 18*. That Name which He declares to those who are given Him out of the World, *John xvii. 6*. And this is that which He effectually leads us to by Himself, as He is the only Way of going to God as a Father, *John*  
xiv.

xiv. 5, 6. that is, as Love. And by doing so He gives us the Rest which He promiseth: For the Love of the Father is the only Rest of the Soul. It is true, we do not this in the first Instant of believing. We believe in GOD through *Christ*, 1 Pet. i. 21. Faith seeks out Rest for the Soul. This is presented to it by *Christ*, the Mediator, as the only procuring Cause. Here it abides not, but by *Christ* it hath an Access to the Father, *Ephes.* ii. 18. into his Love, finds out, that He is Love, as having a Design of Love towards us, all Cause of Anger being taken away. The Soul being thus by Faith through *Christ*, and by Him brought into the Bosom of GOD, into a spiritual Perception and Sense of his Love, there reposes itself. And this is the first Thing the Saints do, in their Communion with the Father.

(2.) FOR that suitable return which is required, this also chiefly consisteth in Love. GOD loves, that He may be beloved. When He comes to command the return of his Love, He says, *My Son, give me thy Heart*. This is the return that He demandeth. When the Soul sees GOD in his Dispensation of Love, to be infinitely lovely, and loving, rests upon, and delights in Him as such, then hath it Communion with Him in Love. This is Love, that GOD loves us first, and then we love Him again.

THAT this Communion with the Father in love may be made the more clear, I shall shew two Things.

[1.] WHEREIN this Love of GOD to us, and our Love to Him agree.

[2.] WHEREIN



[2.] WHEREIN they differ.

[1.] THEY agree in two Things.

1.) THAT they are each a Love of Rest and Complacency.

(1. THE LOVE of GOD is so, Zeph. iii. 17. *The LORD thy GOD in the Midst of thee is mighty: He will save, He will rejoice over thee with Joy, He will rest in his Love, He will Joy over thee with singing.* Both these Things are here assigned unto GOD in his Love; Rest and Delight. *He rejoiceth with singing*, as one that is fully satisfied in that Object He hath fixed his Love on. Here are two Words used to express the Delight and Joy that GOD hath in his Love; יָנוּחַ and יָשׁוּעַ. The first denotes the inward Affection; and to set out the Intensity hereof, it is said, He shall do it בְּשִׂמְחָה *in Gladness*; to have Joy of Heart in Gladness is the highest Expression of Delight in Love: The latter Word denotes the outward Demonstrations of it: אֲרָגָלְאִים seems to be formed of it. It is to exult in outward Demonstration of internal Delight and Joy. *To leap* as Men overcome with some joyful Surprisal. And therefore GOD is said to do this בְּרִנָּה, with a *joyful Sound*, or Singing: To rejoice with Gladness of Heart, to exult with Singing argues the greatest Delight and Complacency possible.

2.) The Return that the Saints make to Him, holds some Analogy with his Love in this; for it is a Love also of Rest and Delight. *Return to thy Rest, O my Soul*, says David, Psal. cxvi. 7. He makes GOD his Rest; that is, he in whom his Soul doth rest, without seeking further for a more desirable Object: *Whom have I*, saith He, *in Hea-*

ven.

ven but Thee, and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides Thee, Psal. lxxiii. 25. Thus the Soul gathers in itself from all its Wandrings, from all other Beloveds to rest in GOD alone, to satiate and content himself in Him, choosing the Father for his present and eternal Rest. And this also with Delight. *Thy Loving-kindness, saith the Psalmist, is better than Life, therefore will I praise Thee*, Psal. lxxiii. 3. *Than Life*, חַיִּים before lives. I will not deny, but Life in a single Consideration sometimes is so expressed: But always emphatically; so that the whole Life, with all the Concernments of it, are thereby intended. Supposing himself in the Jaws of Death rolling into the Grave, thro' innumerable Troubles, yet he found more Sweetness in GOD, than in a long Life, under its best and most noble Considerations.

2.) THE mutual Love of GOD and the Saints agree in this, that the Way of communicating the Fruits of these Loves, is only in *Christ*. The Father communicates no Love to us but thro' *Christ*: And we make no return of Love to Him but thro' *Christ*: He is the Treasure wherein the Father disposeth all the Riches of his Grace; and He is the Priest, into whose Hand we put all the Offerings, that we return unto the Father.

(1. THE Father loves us, and *blest* us with all spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places in *Christ*, Ephes. i. 3, 4. From this Love, He *sheds, or pours out the Holy Spirit richly upon us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour*, Titus iii. 6. In the pouring out of his Love, there is not one Drop falls besides the *LORD Christ*. The holy anointing Oyl, was all poured on the Head of *Aaron*, Psal. cxxxiii. 2. and thence went down to the Skirts of his Cloathing. Love is first poured out on *Christ*; and from Him it drops as the Dew of *Hermon* upon the Souls

of his Saints. Though the Love of the Father's good Pleasure, have its Foundation in his meer Grace, yet its Accomplishment is only in *Christ*. All the Fruits of it, are first given to Him; and it is in Him only that they are despensed to us. So that tho' the Saints see an infinite Ocean of Love in the Bosom of the Father, yet they are not to look for one Drop from Him, but what comes through *Christ*.

(2. OUR Returns are all in Him, and by Him also. And well it is with us, that it is so. What lame and blind Sacrifices should we otherwise present to GOD? He bears the Iniquities of our Offerings, and He adds Incense unto our Prayers. Our Love is fixed on the Father, but it is conveyed to Him through the Son of his Love. He is the only Way for our Graces, as well as our Persons to go to GOD; through Him passeth all our Desire, our Delight, our Complacency, our Obedience.

IN these two Things, there is some Resemblance between that mutual Love of the Father, and the Saints.

2. THERE are sundry Things wherein they differ.

(1.) THE Love of GOD is a Love of Bounty, our Love to Him is a Love of Duty.

1.) THE Love of the Father is a Love of Bounty, a descending Love. Such a Love as carries Him out to do good Things to us, great Things for us. His love lies at the Bottom of all Dispensations towards us: And we scarce any where find any Mention of it, but it is held out as the Cause and Fountain of some free Gift, flowing from it. He loves  
us



us and sends his Son to die for us; He loves us, and bleſſeth us with all ſpiritual Bleſſings. He loves us and chaſtiſeth us. A Love like that of the Heavens to the Earth, when being full of Rain, they pour forth Showers to make it fruitful; as the Sea communicates his Waters to the Rivers by the Way of Bounty out of his own Fulneſs; they return unto it only what they receive from it.

2.) OUR Love unto GOD is a Love of Duty: The Love of a Child. His Love deſcends upon us in Bounty and Fruitfulneſs; our Love aſcends unto Him in Duty and Thankfulneſs. He adds to us by his Love, we nothing to Him by ours. It is indeed made up of theſe four Things. 1. Reſt, 2. Delight, 3. Reverence, 4. Obedience. By theſe do we hold Communion with the Father in his Love.

(2.) THEY differ in this, the Love of the Father to us is an antecedent Love, our Love to Him is a conſequent Love.

1.) THE Love of the Father to us is an antecedent Love, and that in two Reſpects.

(1. It is antecedent in Reſpect of our Love, 1 *John* iv. 10. *Herein is Love, not that we loved GOD, but that He loved us firſt.* His Love goes before ours. The Father loves the Child, when the Child knows not the Father; much leſs loves him. Yea we are by Nature, *Rom.* i. 30. *Haters of GOD.* He is in his own Nature, a *Lover of Men*; and ſurely all mutual Love between Him and us, muſt begin on his Hand.

(2. IN Reſpect of all other Cauſes of Love whatever. It goes not only before our Love, but alſo

any Thing in us that is lovely. *Rom. v. 8.* God commendeth his Love towards us, in that whilst we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us. Not only his Love, but the eminent Fruit thereof, is made out towards us, as Sinners. The very mention of that removes all Causes, all moving Occasions of Love whatever. Yet as such, have we the Commendation of the Father's Love unto us, by a most signal Testimony. Not only when we have done no Good, but when we are in our Blood, doth he love us. Not because we are better than others; but because Himself is infinitely good.

2.) OUR Love is consequential in both these Regards:

(1. IN Respect of the Love of GOD. Never did Creature turn his Affections towards GOD, if the Heart of GOD were not first set upon him.

(2. IN Respect of sufficient Causes of Love. GOD must be revealed unto us as lovely and desirable, as a suitable Object to the Soul to set up its Rest upon, before we can bear any Love unto Him. The Saints in this Sense do not love GOD for nothing, but for that Excellency, Loveliness, and Desirableness that is in Him.





## CHAP. IV.

*Inferences from the former Doctrine.*

**H**AVING thus discovered the Nature of that Communion which we have with the Father, it remaineth that we give some Exhortations to it, and Directions in it.

I. FIRST, Then, this is a Duty wherein *Christians* are but little exercised, namely, in holding Communion with the Father in Love. Unacquaintedness with our Mercies, our Privileges, is our Sin, as well as our Trouble. We hearken not to the Voice of the Spirit, which is given us, that we may know the Things that are freely bestowed on us of GOD. This makes us go heavily, when we might rejoyce; and to be weak, where we might be strong in the LORD. How few of the Saints are experimentally acquainted with this Privilege! Let us then,

(1.) EYE the Father as Love; Look on Him as one most kind and tender. Let us look on Him by Faith, as one that hath had Thoughts of Kindness towards us from everlasting. It is a Misapprehension of GOD, that makes any run from Him, who have the least Breathing wrought in them after Him. They that know Thee will put their Trust in Thee. Man cannot abide with GOD in spiritual Meditations. He loseth Souls Company  
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by their Want of this insight into his Love. They fix their Thoughts only on his terrible Majesty, and so their Spirits are not endeared. Would a Soul continually eye his Tenderness and Compassion, his Thoughts of Kindness that have been from of old, it could not bear an Hour's Absence from Him; whereas now perhaps, it cannot watch with Him one Hour. Let then this be the Saints first Notion of the Father, as one full of free Love towards them: Let their Hearts and Thoughts be filled with breaking through all Discouragements that lye in the Way. To raise them hereunto, let them consider,

1. WHOSE Love it is? It is the Love of Him who is in Himself All-sufficient, infinitely satiated with Himself and his own glorious Excellencies. Who hath no need to go forth with his Love unto others, nor to seek an Object of it without Himself. There might be Rest with Delight and Complacency to Eternity. He had his Son also, his eternal Wisdom to rejoyce and delight Himself in from all Eternity, *Prov. viii. 30.* This might take up and satiate the whole Delight of the Father: But He will love his Saints also. And it is a Love, wherein He seeks not his own Satisfaction only, but our Good also. The Love of a God, the Love of a Father, whose proper Outgoings are Kindness and Bounty.

(2.) WHAT Kind of Love it is? And it is,

1.) ETERNAL. It was fixed on us before the *Foundation of the World*, before we were, or had done the least Good; then were his Thoughts upon us, then was his Delight in us. It was from Eternity that He laid in his own Bosom a Design  
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to make our Happiness. The very Thoughts of this, is enough to make all that is within us like the Babe in the Womb of *Elizabeth*, to leap for Joy. A Sense of it cannot but prostrate our Souls to the lowest Abasement of an humble, holy, Reverence, and make us rejoyce before Him with trembling.

2.) FREE. He loves us because He will; there was, there is nothing in us, for which we should be beloved. Did we deserve his Love, it must go less in its Valuation. Things of due Debt are seldom the Matter of Thankfulness; but this is merely of Grace.

LET, I say, the Soul frequently eye the Love of the Father, and that under these Considerations.

(2.) So eye it, as to receive it; unless this be added, all is in vain as to any Communion with God. We do not hold Communion with Him in any Thing, until it be received by Faith. This then is that which I would provoke the Saints to, even to believe this Love of God for themselves; believe that such is the Heart of the Father towards them, accept of his Witness herein. His Love is not ours until it be so received. Continually then exercise Faith on God, as Love to thee, as embracing thee with free Love.

(3.) LET it have its proper Efficacy upon thy Heart, in Returns of Love to Him again. So shall we walk in the Light of God's Countenance, and hold holy Communion with our Father all the Day long. Let us not deal unkindly with Him, and return Him Slighting for his Good-will. Let there not be such an Heart in us, as to deal so unthankfully with our God.

Now to further us in this Duty, and constant Practice of it, I shall add one or two Considerations.

1.) IT is exceeding acceptable to GOD even our Father, that we should thus hold Communion with Him in his Love; that He may be received into our Souls, as one full of Love, Tenderneſs, and Kindneſs towards us. Fleſh and Blood is apt to have hard Thoughts of Him; to think He is al-ways angry, yea implacable: That is not for poor Creatures to draw nigh to Him, that nothing in the World is more deſirable than never to come into his Preſence. *I knew thou waſt an aſtore Man,* ſaith the evil Servant in the Goſpel. Now there is not any Thing more grievous to the LORD, than ſuch Thoughts as theſe. It is exceeding grievous to the Spirit of GOD, to be ſo ſlandered by thoſe He dearly loves. How doth He expoſtulate this with Sion? *What Iniquity have you ſeen in me?* ſaith He, *have I been a Wilderneſs unto you, or a Land of Darkneſs?* Sion hath ſaid, *the LORD hath forgotten me, and my GOD hath forſaken me.* The LORD hath taken nothing worſe at the Hands of his, than ſuch hard Thoughts of Him, knowing full well what Fruit this bitter Root is like to bear; what Alienation of Heart, what Drawings back, what Unbelief? How unwilling is a Child to come into the Preſence of an angry Father? Conſider then this in the firſt Place. Receiving of the Father as He holds out Love to the Soul, is exceeding acceptable unto Him.

2. THIS will be exceeding effectual to endear thy Soul unto GOD, to cauſe thee to delight in Him, and to make thy Abode with Him. Many Saints have no greater Burthen in their Lives, than



than that their Hearts do not constantly delight in God; that there is still an Indisposedness of Spirit to close walking with Him. What is at the Bottom of this Distemper? It is their Unskilfulness in this Duty, even of holding Communion with the Father in Love. So much as we see of the Love of God, so much shall we delight in Him, and no more. Every other Discovery of God without this, will but make the Soul fly from Him. But if the Heart be once much taken up with this, the Eminency of the Father's Love, it cannot chuse but be overpower'd, conquer'd and endeared unto Him. Sit down a little at the Fountain, and you will quickly have a farther Discovery of the Sweetness of the Streams. You who have run from Him, will not be able after a while, to keep at a Distance for a Moment.

To make some farther Improvement of this Truth, it will discover unto us the Eminency and Privilege of the Saints of God. What low Thoughts soever the Sons of Men may have of them, they have Meat to eat that the World knows not of; they have close Communion and Fellowship with the Father, they deal with Him in the Interchange of Love. Men are generally esteemed according to the Company they keep. It is an Honour to stand in the Presence of Princes, though but as Servants. What Honour then have all the Saints, to stand with Boldness in the Presence of the Father, there to enjoy his Bosom-Love? Whilst others have their Fellowship with Satan, and their own Lusts, *whose God is their Belly, and whose Glory is in their Shame, who mind earthly Things*; they have this sweet Communion with the Father.

MOREOVER; what a safe and *sweet Retreat* is here for the Saints, in all the *Scorns, Reproaches, Scandals*, Misrepresentations which they undergo in the World. When a Child is abused abroad in the Streets by Strangers, he runs with Speed to the Bosom of his Father; there he makes his Complaint, and is comforted. In all the hard Censures which we meet with in the Streets of the World, we may run to our Father, and be comforted. *As one whom his Mother comforteth, so will I comfort you*, saith the LORD, *Isa. lxvi. 13.* So that the Soul may say, If I have Hatred in the World, I will go where I am sure of Love: Though all others are hard to me, yet my Father is tender, and full of Compassion: I will go to Him, and satisfy myself in Him: Here I am accounted vile, frowned on, and rejected, but I have Honour and Love with Him, whose Kindness is better than Life itself. There I shall have all Things in the Fountain, which others have but in the Drops: There is in my Father's Love, every Thing desirable: There is the Sweetness of all Mercies, and that fully and durably.

EVIDENTLY then, real Christians are the most mistaken Men in the World. If they say, come and have Fellowship with us; are not Men ready to say; Why, what are you? A sorry Company of seditious, factious Persons: Be it known unto you, that we despise your Fellowship; when we intend to leave Fellowship with all honest Men, then will we come to you, But alas! how are Men mistaken? *Truly, their Fellowship is with the Father*, let Men think of it as they please, they have close, spiritual, heavenly Refreshings in the mutual Communication of Love with the Father Himself. How they are generally misconceived,  
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the Apostle declares, 2 Cor. vi. 8, 9, 10. *As deceived, and yet true, as unknown, and yet well known, as dying, and behold we live, as chastened, and not killed, as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, yet possessing all Things.* And as it is thus in general, so in no one Thing more than this, that they are looked on as poor, low, despicable Persons, when indeed they are the only great and noble Personages in the World. Consider the Company they keep, it is with the Father, who is so glorious; the Merchandize they trade in, it is Love: What so precious? *Doubtless they are the Excellent on the Earth,* Psal. xvi. 3.

Now then if these Things are so, What Manner of Men ought we to be, in all Manner of holy Conversation? Even our GOD is a consuming Fire. What Communion is there between Light and Darkness? Shall Sin and Lust dwell in those Thoughts which receive and carry out Love, from and to the Father? Holiness becometh his Presence forever. An unclean Spirit cannot draw nigh unto Him; an unholy Heart can make no Abode with Him. A lewd Person will not desire to hold Fellowship with a sober Man, and will a Man of vain and foolish Imaginations, hold Communion with the most holy GOD? There is not any Consideration of this Love, but it is a powerful Motive to Holiness. *Ephraim says, What have I to do any more with Idols,* when in GOD he finds Salvation? Communion with the Father is wholly inconsistent with loose Walking. *If we say that we have Fellowship with Him, and walk in Darkness, we lie; and do not the Truth,* 1 John i. 6. He that saith *I know Him,* I have Communion with Him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a Liar



*a Liar and the Truth is not in Him*, ch. i. 4. The specious and glorious Pretence made to an Acquaintance with the Father, without Holiness and Obedience to his Commandments, serves only to prove the Pretenders to be Liars. The Love of the World and of the Father, dwell not together.

AND if this be so, How many that go under the Name of Christians, come short of the Truth of it? How unacquainted are the Generality with the Mystery of this Communion? Do not many very evidently hold Communion with their Lusts and with the World, and yet would be thought to have a Portion among them that are sanctified? They have neither *new Name* nor *white Stone*, and yet would be called the People of the Most High. May it not be said of many of them, rather that GOD is not in all their Thoughts, than that they have Communion with Him? The LORD open the Eyes of Men, that they may see and know that Walking with GOD is a Matter not of Form, but of Power.

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*The End of the Eighteenth VOLUME.*





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OF THE

EIGHTEENTH VOLUME.



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